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MK NEWS

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St John Ambulance man gets award from Queen

SEE **PAGE 12**

Chopper club members descend on thehub:mk

SEE **PAGE 5**

Plea to trace missing Med cruise hubby

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

A WIFE has made an emotional plea for help tracing her husband who went missing while on a Mediterranean cruise.

John Halford, 63, of Greenleys, was not on board his Thomson cruise liner when it docked in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, on the morning of Thursday, April 7.

Now his wife Ruth, 45, and his three children, who are 20, 18 and 16, are waiting anxiously at home for more news from Interpol, which is conducting the international search.

Mrs Halford said: "As time goes on the feelings are getting worse and worse.

"We are all very up and down at the moment - I was signed off work for a while and the kids look to me for support.

"Sometimes it's getting easier, then something will trigger a memory. It's the not knowing that's the worst."

On April 6 John sent a text to Mrs Halford to give her the details of his flight home, but when she was getting ready to pick him up the next day someone phoned her to say he wasn't on the plane.

She said there are reports from other passengers of him drinking cocktails on his own in one of the bars just before midnight on April 6 and it was between then and disembarkation at around 7am the next day that he disappeared.

Mrs Halford added police had spoken to other passengers who said he was having a good time, with one man from Hertfordshire who had been drinking with him saying his was in a good mood.

Missing: John Halford

Wife thinks her husband has been lost overboard after spending time in the cruise ship's cocktail bar

His rucksack was found on the bed in his cabin, along with his passport, wallet and mobile phone.

She said: "I think he's gone overboard. The police have checked all possibilities – there was a swipe card used to get off and on the ship that wasn't used, so there's no way he could've got off without anyone knowing."

"If anyone has information can they please get in touch with the local police and let them know anything."

■ Anyone who was on the cruise with John or knows where he might be should contact Thames Valley Police on 0845 8 505 505, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Midsummer treats as shoppers get sweeties from Easter egg characters

GIANT Easter egg characters handed out treats to shoppers in Midsummer Place at the weekend.

Martin Hindson, centre manager, said: "The giant eggs were fabulous and a cracking success with children that helped deliver the Easter spirit to everyone."

See what other Easter activities took place in the city on page 23.

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A SMASH between a car and a bus outside Milton Keynes Hospital caused serious delays for traffic on Thursday afternoon. The driver of a red Ford Mondeo is believed to have suffered a medical episode, which caused them to hit the bus on the H8 Standing Way at around 4.55pm. Everyone was taken off the bus safely.

Fire family saved by smoke alarms

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

A MAN whose family and six dogs escaped a fire at their home said their smoke alarms saved their lives.

The blaze has also prompted firefighters to warn people not to go back into a burning building after Mick Mercer, 51, returned to look for his dogs.

The incident, in Capian Walk, Two Mile Ash – one of a spate of fires over the bank holiday weekend – was attended by three crews at 1.30am on Good Friday.

Mr Mercer had put a pan of food on to cook and then fallen asleep, but his wife and son were woken by the sound of the smoke alarms going off.

He said: "We check the fire alarms regularly and I had only changed the batteries a week before. They definitely saved us."

He managed to get out of the house with his wife Penny, son Drew and two of their six Yorkshire terrier cross breeds, but he returned to search for the other four.

Firefighters helped him to safety and he was taken to hospital suffering from the effects of breathing in smoke.

He said: "Maybe it was a bit stupid but at the same time it's instinct, the dogs are part of our lives."

Earlier this month, a man in Cheshire died when he went back inside his burning home to try to rescue his dog and cat.

Watch manager Lee Bloom said: "We fully understand how concerned people are about their pets, but it's vital they don't go back into a building when it is on fire.

"With no protection against the smoke and heat, it can end in tragedy."

Two of the dogs were rescued from inside the house and the remaining two were found outside following a search.

In other incidents over the Easter weekend, firefighters led seven adults to safety at Serpentine Court, Bletchley, on Thursday night after a flat caught fire.

And on Easter Sunday, three crews were called to the Wolverton Agora Centre to put out a fire in a first-floor church meeting room.

Councillors say landfill operator must stick to its permitted opening times

AN APPLICATION to allow a landfill company to open its site outside agreed times was turned down by councillors last week.

As reported in last week's MK NEWS, residents were worried the application by WRG would mean the landfill site in West Bletchley could open seven days a week.

If approved, WRG would have been able to write to the council to request, at short notice, to open outside permitted times to enable any backlogs to be dealt with.

The move, which followed collection problems due to the bad weather at Christmas, would have meant it could have been opened on bank holidays and Sundays.

Denise Pearson, who lives in Milton Grove next to the site, spoke out at the meeting of Milton Keynes Council's planning committee on Tuesday, saying: "We believe this could lead to the site being open carte blanche."

West Bletchley Town councillor Tony Mabbott added: "I suggest this is a big company that should be able to work out its arrangements with the council to tackle things like bank holidays."

The committee members agreed and turned down the application.

Despite the site now not able to open this Friday due to the royal wedding, the council said planned collections would still take place.

A spokesman said: "We are looking at what options are available to us in terms of where the refuse goes."

Wind farm plans set to go on public display

CONTROVERSIAL plans for a wind farm are to go on public display.

RWE npower renewables will be holding exhibitions for residents to see its plans for the farm on a site between Haversham and Little Linford.

Christopher Nunn, developer at the firm, said: "We will be presenting the most up-to-date information about the site, which could comprise of up to five wind turbines."

He claimed the site could generate enough electricity each year to power more than all the households in the Hanslope Park and Wolverton wards put together.

The exhibitions will take place at Haversham Social and Community Centre on May 6 from 4-7pm and May 7 from 10am-4pm.

BNP man arrested at mosque protest

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

THE former leader of the city's BNP was arrested while taking part in a protest against a new mosque.

Kieren Trent was arrested in Victoria Street, Wolverton, during a demonstration held by the right-wing group on Sunday afternoon. A female who was at the protest was also arrested.

The demonstration took place following the decision by Milton Keynes Council's planning committee to allow The Plough pub in Manor Road, Bletchley, to be converted into a mosque.

It is believed members of the BNP approached Councillor Mike Galloway, cabinet member for development and a member of the committee, because he had voted in favour of the plans.

A police spokesman said: "Officers arrived at the scene and arrested two people on suspicion of racially aggravated public order.

"A 20-year-old man and a 26-year-old woman were taken to police custody in Milton Keynes and later released on bail.

"Reassurance patrols will continue to take place in the area and Thames Valley Police is committed to working with its partners to ensure the safety of all communities in Milton Keynes. Anyone attempting to protest unlawfully can expect a robust response."

As previously reported by MK NEWS, the plans to convert the disused pub have faced heavy opposition from local residents and members of city right-wing groups like the Milton Keynes BNP and England is Ours. Before the proposal was given the go-ahead, more than 100 people took part in a protest outside the pub.

Numerous acts of vandalism have also taken place at the site, such as a pig's head being thrown on the roof, resulting in the installation of CCTV cameras.

BNP member Kieren Trent at an earlier protest outside The Plough pub in Bletchley which city Muslims are due to convert into a mosque

City MPs lobby for improved rail service to London Euston

CITY MPs are pushing for an improved rail service between Milton Keynes and London Euston.

Iain Stewart and Mark Lancaster have written to the consultation team deciding who the West Coast Mainline franchise, currently operated by Virgin Trains, should go to in 2012.

The pair argued that either a direct peak-hour service should be provided or some stopping services to allow commuters to board.

They also pointed out that the business community of Milton Keynes is fast growing - increasing the number of journeys made to and from the city.

Mr Stewart, Milton Keynes South MP and transport select committee member, said: "There is considerable anger among many of our constituents that they are required to pay premium season ticket prices, yet are denied access to services at peak periods, either because services do not stop or because there is a set down/pick up restriction on services that do stop."

Mr Lancaster, MP for Milton Keynes North, added: "The trains are often overcrowded. With more than 25,000 planning applications in place for the city, further population increase will put a massive strain on these services. I believe this consultation exercise provides a good opportunity to address this."

Girl in hospital after falling from car

A TEENAGER is in intensive care after falling from a car thought to have been driven by a 16-year-old.

The 19-year-old girl is believed to have fallen from the vehicle, possibly a blue Vauxhall Corsa, as it was being driven around a car park.

The incident happend in the Manor Fields car park in Bletchley between 8.45 and 9.30pm on Tuesday last week.

The victim was taken to Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital shortly afterwards.

A 16 year-old girl from Bletchley was arrested on suspicion of dangerous driving and released on bail until Saturday.

Anyone with information should call police on 0845 8 505 505, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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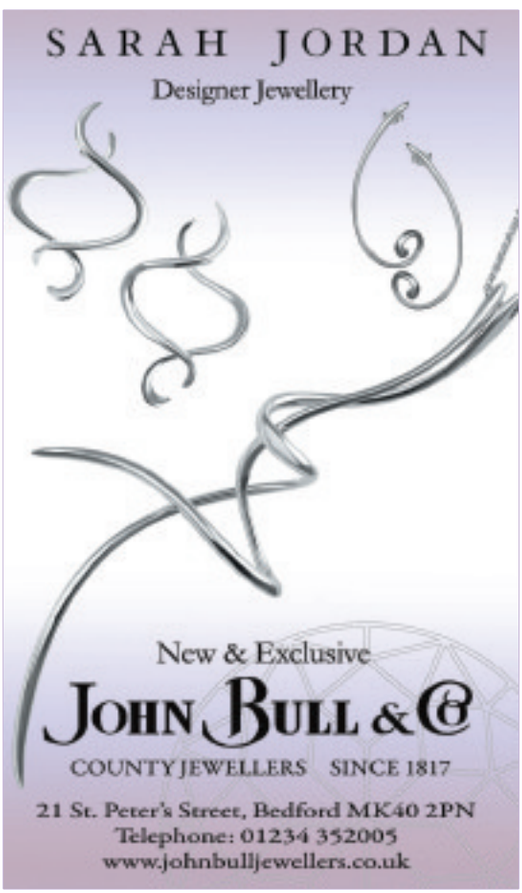

MK LETTERS

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City should remain unique and true to original design

SIR – I agree wholeheartedly with Theo Chalmers in your piece 'University for Growing City' (MK News, April 13) that we want the city to remain unique and true to the vision of its designers.

So of course we must retain the grid roads, roundabouts, open rural spaces and lovely greenswards – and extend them.

The last thing we want is city streets and buildings (like the appalling Hub and its surroundings), but one that embraces the best of country and town living, but with the facilities of a modern city.

We do need a university – with a campus, not buildings scattered throughout an urbanised centre – to attract people.

Our campus should offer facilities for citizens and visitors to enjoy niche theatre, cinema, music and out-of-hours specialist courses to balance our physical growth with intellectual development. There is a reason why so many seek to live in university and cathedral towns – we need to aspire to that culture too.

We must also ditch the nonsensical transport strategy and offer much, much more off-road parking.

We can't grow as a city if people don't come here to enjoy our shops, facilities and arts and they won't come here without somewhere easy and inexpensive to park.

All our petrol stations should offer electric charging points, LPG and bio fuel – but as we move towards that green future, we must be able to park in town easily. Where are the promised multi-storey car parks?

Above all, why on earth isn't the council giving us facilities to engage properly in the debate and why isn't it listening to its electorates concerns? The failure to consult properly is breathtaking.

Nonie Westbourne
Sent by e-mail

No change, thank you

SIR – In response to the article in your paper (MK NEWS, April 13), I would like to say that what I want to see in Milton Keynes is, basically, no change.

The original design of Milton Keynes about 40 years ago is obviously old, but it is good, effective and unique.

I would like to see the grid road system continue and extended to all new areas such as the Western Expansion Area if expansions are inevitable.

Just keep Milton Keynes as it is and extend it to any developments.

Name and address supplied

Winner takes all

SIR – I was appalled to read John Pinkerton's and John Napper's letters on the Alternative Vote (AV) in MK NEWS on April 20.

It is certainly not as straight forward as they both state.

AV is the only way less popular political parties could win an election.

First past the post (FPTP) is used globally, except for in three other countries which changed to AV, but now wish to revert back to FPTP, a common sense system that is both fair and straight forward.

FPTP is the method used for all sorts of ballots. Why? Because it is transparent and not subject to manipulation.

Why does it matter if the winning candidate does not get 50 per cent of the votes? Why should this candidate be penalised if the remaining voters choose to waste their votes on obscure candidates knowing quite well that their votes will not count?

G Rebeyro
Crownhill

■ SIR – In response to John Pinkerton's reply on AV.

He quotes that it is a fairer way, but he is missing the point. Our current system means that the prospective MP who fails to convince enough constituents to vote for his or her policies has 'failed'.

Under AV these 'failed' candidates would get a second, third or fourth chance to win. I fail to see how that can possibly be fair, do we really want Westminster filled with 'failed' politicians.

Australia has had this system for a number of years, everyone hates it and they are desperately trying to get rid of it. Indeed the politicians had to make it a legal requirement to make disillusioned people vote.

Perhaps if we had a legal requirement to vote we would not have the apathy we have now where the turnout to vote is generally so low.

Malcolm Tripp
Hockliffe Brae, Walnut Tree

■ SIR – In recent articles in your paper, many of those defending our current voting system insist on comparing it to a race and claim that whoever is first 'past the post' should get the 'gold medal'.

At present there is no post for any of the contestants to pass. Comparing the election of an MP to a race is not a very useful or accurate analogy, but if we have to use it then why not actually set a post or a finishing line, say at achieving 50 per cent of the vote?

Anything less than that and no-one has finished first because no-one has completed the course.

Tom Bolton
Emerson Valley

Parks balancing act

SIR – In response to Mr C Barron's letter 'Horses for courses' on April 13.

We'd like to assure Mr Barron that The Parks Trust cares greatly about any damage caused to our parks.

Balancing the needs of all our visitors can be tricky.

The activities of walkers, cyclists, dog owners, horse riders, anglers, etc can sometimes impact upon each other and we ask all park users to act responsibly so that everyone can enjoy our beautiful parks.

We encourage our visitors to report any problems, so that we can investigate and prevent any further damage.

Please contact us on 01908 233600, or visit www.theparkstrust.com.

Liz Woznicki
The Parks Trust

Dedicated MP

SIR – I was somewhat dismayed to read your article in last week's MK NEWS that some constituents of our local MP, Iain Stewart, felt that his surgeries were inadequate.

Lest readers form the view that Mr Stewart does not appear to take his duties as a constituency MP seriously, I would like to state that, in my opinion, he is the very embodiment of a first class representative.

I first came across him when he gave an impassioned appeal on behalf of local residents at the public inquiry concerning the Nampack housing development in Woburn Sands last year and in so doing helped to get the project scaled back.

He has since come out publicly against a proposal by Storey Homes to develop some houses on open countryside in Wavendon.

He even took time to visit me to assure me that certain statements made by Government ministers over a more relaxed approach to planning would not affect the outcome.

Were the country to have more like Mr Stewart – who is affable, approachable and dedicated to the concerns of his constituents – then I feel we would all be a lot better off.

Nicholas S Luke
Woburn Sands

Two Mile Ash trees

SIR – Following the press coverage, and letters, in relation to regeneration in Two Mile Ash (TMA) I would like to explain the position of the parish council.

The regeneration has been under consideration since 2004 and there has been extensive consultation over the last two years.

The additional parking was not intended to be sufficient for all the TMA school pupils' parents' cars. The intention was to cope with normal daytime demand and prevent parking on verges, etc.

The present plan, which has been accepted by the council, retains all the maples on the NE side of the central area.

The new proposal is being considered and council officers have been asked to report back on its viability.

No decisions have yet been made about the landscaping of the centre, as any planting is best done in the winter months. The intention is to have an area, popular with residents, for walking and sitting.

The ambulance bay and the road modifications on the NE side has been completed.

The SW side needs to be completed during the summer, when both schools' pupils are on holiday

The trees that were removed to facilitate the 'kiss and drop' at TMA Middle School were all horse chestnuts and have been replaced with rowans, closer to the school.

Please be assured that I, and the other councillors, value our trees. Therefore if there are trees lost, we have been ensuring, where practicable, new trees are planted.

John Hawthorn
Chairman of Abbey Hill Parish Council

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Members of The National Chopper Club congregated at thehub:mk on Easter Sunday

Chopper club members ride into thehub:mk

EASTER Sunday at thehub:mk was a bank holiday spectacle with about 450 members of The National Chopper Club arriving en masse at the popular venue.

Riders from across the UK, Ireland and Europe had spent the weekend enjoying the glorious weather with thehub:mk chosen as the venue for the final day after an all-counties biker meeting in Cublington, near Leighton Buzzard, on Saturday.

A fantastic array of bikes were proudly displayed to the public with some picking up honours in the club competition, with categories including Best in Show, Best Chopper, Best Trike and Best Ol' Ladies.

The event, which is held across the UK and Europe, takes place every bank holiday through the summer. Previous events in the city have been held at Willen Lake and The Bowl.

Mother in jail after death in Pakistan

Boy, 10, killed in family dispute over inheritance

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

A CITY taxi driver is in shock after his 10-year-old nephew was killed in Pakistan.

Danyel Hussain is thought to have been strangled with a rope and had his head smashed with a brick in the Jhelum area.

A woman from Fishermead, Irfana Ali – who is five-months pregnant – has been arrested on suspicion of murder along with her husband Mohammed Ali and his brother Taswar Hussain.

It is thought Danyel, who was Mr Ali's half brother, was killed during a dispute over a family inheritance.

Mrs Ali, 27, is currently in a city jail in Jhelum in the Punjab Province along with her three daughters – the youngest of whom is 18 months old.

Nobody has yet been charged, but if they are eventually found guilty they could face the death penalty.

Malik Safdar, 54, of Greenleys, who is Danyel's uncle said: "It's really horrible. When we heard that the boy had been killed we couldn't believe it.

"Danyel was such a cheery boy. He was strong too – he won a weight-lifting competition and donated all the money to the mosque and to charity.

"And even though he was younger than them, he was very protective of his stepsisters.

"It's just awful. I've had skin rashes and problems with dermatitis because of the stress."

Mrs Ali's family live in Blackburn and have urged their MP Jack Straw to help free the couple and their children.

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office has also been involved.

A spokesman said: "We are aware of the arrest of two British nationals in Pakistan and are providing consular assistance."

Police want help to trace missing man

Missing: Glenn Mundy

A FISHERMEAD man who went missing over the weekend has sparked an appeal from the police for the public's help in tracing him.

Glenn Mundy, 27, of no fixed abode, last spoke to family members, who live out of the area, on Friday evening.

Officers are concerned for Mr Mundy's welfare as he has health issues and no money on him.

He is white, slim, 6ft 3ins tall with dark hair, which may be shaven, and green eyes.

He has a dragon tattoo on his right arm, a Leeds United tattoo on his left arm and a tribal tattoo on one of his forearms. He is unshaven, wears thin-rimmed glasses and has scars on his left eyebrow and lower lip.

He also walks with a slight limp.

As well as living in Milton Keynes, Mr Mundy also has connections to the Andover area of Hampshire and Wiltshire.

Anyone who sees him, or knows his whereabouts, is asked to contact DCI Ray Summers on 0845 8 505 505.

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Death of designer who helped put MK on map

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

THE family of a man who helped design Milton Keynes has paid tribute to him following his sudden death.

John Seed, 71, a designer at city-based developers David Lock Associates, died after suffering a heart attack while he was cycling last month.

The father-of-three had played a key role in the design of Milton Keynes and had drawn up plans for city features such as Willen Local Centre.

His 40-year-old son Roger said the family had not realised the extent of his great achievements.

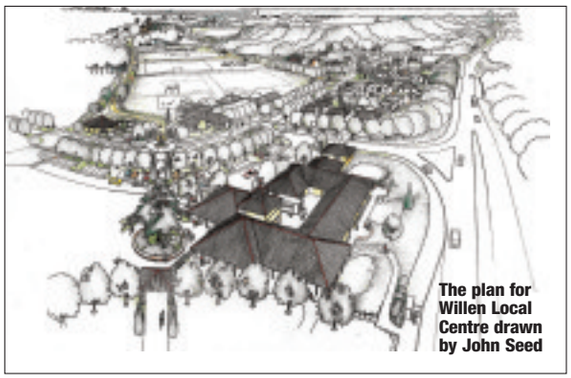
He said: "Our father was involved in the design of Milton Keynes far more than I was aware of – he was always very modest.

"He was such an active man and his death came as a great shock to everyone.

"Aside from architecture, being outdoors was a passion of his. When we were children we would always have holidays in the Lake District and North Yorkshire climbing.

"He clearly loved and valued his children and grandchildren very much and saw us as often as he could."

Grandfather-of-four John had worked as a designer since 1971 and was also involved in the design of Cardiff Bay and many other projects worldwide.



The plan for Willen Local Centre drawn by John Seed

John Seed: Died of a heart attack while cycling

His other son Jonathan, 38, added: "John always said he would like to go while on top of a mountain or undertaking some similar exploit, so his passing during a long bike ride two weeks ago, although too soon for us all, is close to what he would have wished for."

Andy Hiorns, a partner at David Lock Associates, said: "John's designs are evident throughout the city. He was responsible for plans for places such as Great Linford, Willen Park, Shenley Brook End and Emerson Valley. He had a remarkable talent in visualising new areas of the city."

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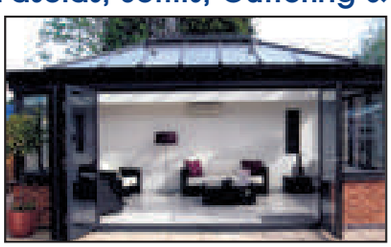

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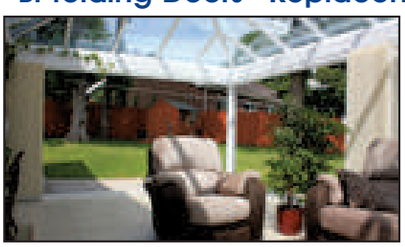

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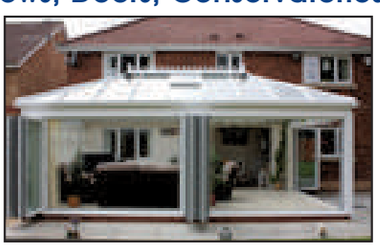

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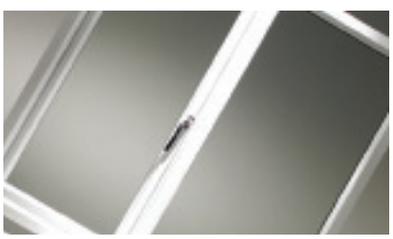

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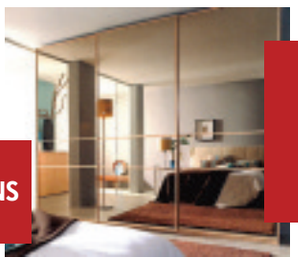

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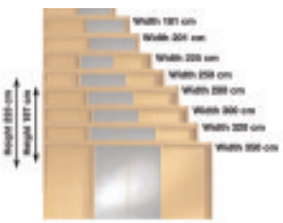

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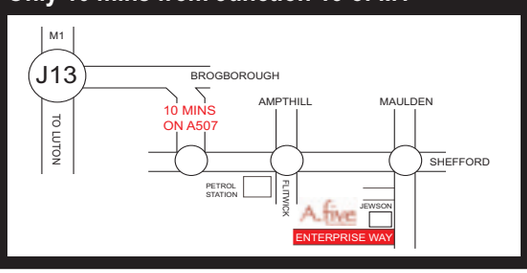

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Youngsters liven up underpass

PEDESTRIANS in Netherfield will be treated to something a bit different thanks to some young volunteer artists.

The underpass between Netherfield and Tinkers Bridge was painted by young local artist Neil Kean and other volunteers, with the help of community mobiliser Josan Race and funding from Woughton Community Council.

The designs, by art students at MK Academy, were projected onto the wall for the artists to paint with the theme of cartoons and comics.

The project followed a huge piece on Alice in Wonderland which was painted onto the side of the Tinkers Bridge Community Centre and is already leading to work elsewhere.

Josan said: "Tesco in Tinkers Bridge has also asked us to do some work for them and we will be doing the other underpass in Netherfield too."

Anyone who wants to get involved in some of the upcoming projects should email josan@communityactionmk.org.

Bus pass decision a 'slap in the face'

Pensioners feel the pinch over having to pay for early travel

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

'My phone hasn't stopped ringing with people complaining': Peter Ballantyne, Milton Keynes Bus Users Group chairman

'We had to make these very significant cuts and this was one we decided to make': Cllr Sam Crooks, head of finance at MK Council

THE finance chief at Milton Keynes Council has defended its decision to reduce the use of OAP bus passes.

Since the council's budget was agreed in February and implemented at the beginning of April, Milton Keynes Bus Users' Group (MKBUG) says it has been inundated with calls from angry pensioners.

Those over the age of 65 could previously travel for free before 9.30am, under a scheme implemented at the discretion of the council.

However, in the budget the use of the passes was reduced to the statutory minimum, meaning travel before 9.30am is now charged at the full price.

Peter Ballantyne, Milton Keynes Bus Users Group chairman, has hit out at this decision, saying it will particularly affect those pensioners who do volunteering work.

He said: "It's a slap in the face for pensioners. My phone hasn't stopped ringing with people complaining, saying they can't go and do their volunteering anymore.

"Because of the route profiles, many pensioners will have to get two buses to get to their destination, meaning two full fares."

Councillor Sam Crooks said for a long time senior citizens couldn't use their passes before 9.30am until this was changed a number of years ago by the council, but they are now 'being brought back to a core time'.

He added: "We had to make these very significant cuts and this was one we decided to make.

"There was also a concern that some people were still working and were being able to use this to go to work."

Revised days for bank holiday refuse collection service

WITH the royal wedding and May Day creating another long bank holiday weekend, Milton Keynes Council has revised its dates for bin collections.

Residents should put out their refuse and recycling on their property boundary by 7am of the revised collection days.

NORMAL COLLECTION DAY	REVISED COLLECTION DAY
Bank Holiday Monday	Tuesday
Tuesday	Wednesday, May 4
Wednesday, May 4	Thursday, May 5
Thursday, May 5	Friday, May 6
Friday, May 6	Saturday, May 7

Normal collections resume on Monday, May 9.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Billy Harley feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps.

Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service the Bedford, Milton Keynes & Leighton Buzzard areas and Billy is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Billy a call for a free quotation on **0800 61 21 118** and he'll be happy to help!

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How will you mark the royal wedding?

Penning a message: Mayor Debbie Brock signing royal wedding book

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

NEARLY 40 street parties are due to take place in Milton Keynes to celebrate the royal wedding.

With just two days to go, the city is getting geared-up to watch Prince William and Kate Middleton tie the knot and residents will be taking to the streets to mark the event.

Alongside the 37 street parties that Milton Keynes Council has been told about, there will also be a variety of other celebrations.

Milton Keynes Theatre is marking the occasion by offering people named William or Kate a free ticket to see Jeffrey Bernard is Unwell on Friday evening.

Other celebrations include a wedding fair at The Living Room and crown decorating sessions and curtsy lessons for youngsters at The Disney Store at thecentre:mk.

Milton Keynes will also be sending its own wedding gift to the royal couple with a book of messages signed by shoppers at Midsummer Place.

City mayor Councillor Debbie Brock said: "I am delighted to see that so many residents in Milton Keynes will be celebrating the royal wedding by organising street parties.

"I am sure they will be enjoyed by all and be a great way to develop a fantastic community spirit for many years to come."

With an extra bank holiday to mark the nuptials what have you got planned to celebrate?

Let us know how you will be marking the occasion by e-mailing us at editor@mk-news.co.uk.

■ **MK NEWS is also asking couples to send in their unusual or funny wedding photos, which will be featured on our website - www.mk-news.co.uk. The best one will also appear in next week's paper. Send your pictures to editor@mk-news.co.uk.**

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Andrew's lifesaving work earns top St John honour

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

A FIRST aider has been rewarded by the Queen for his volunteer work.

Andrew Wright, from Neath Hill, volunteers for St John's Ambulance and was invested into the Order of St John on April 14 - a Royal Order of Chivalry with each recipient approved by the Queen for their exceptional service.

Andrew, who is the officer in charge of the Wolverton Adult Unit, has been a member for 26 years and has undertaken duties such as concerts at the Bowl and point-to-point races.

On one occasion he helped treat a rider who had life-threatening injuries when her horse fell at a jump and landed on top of her.

Andrew said: "It's such an honour to become a member of the Order of St John.

"As all my family are members, St John Ambulance is very much part of our life but we get immense enjoyment from it and applying what we have learnt to be the difference between a life lost and a life saved."

Andrew was presented with the order's insignia by Rodney Green, the prior of the Priory of England and the Islands.

Mr Green said: "Andrew is a brilliant example of how volunteers have an important role to play in communities and we hope that their commitment inspires others to be the difference within their local area too."

The Order of St John is one of the world's oldest charities and traces its origins back 900 years to the Knights Hospitaller and the first Hospital of St John in Jerusalem in 1078.

Award for first aider Andrew Wright

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City set to celebrate its rich arts culture

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

A PROGRAMME of events has been created to highlight the city's arts and heritage.

Thirty-four organisations across Milton Keynes have come together to entice people to explore something different and discover more about the city's rich culture.

They have been working with Milton Keynes Council's arts and heritage team to create a ten-day programme with more than 200 opportunities to get involved.

They hope to get people involved in discovering things such as the most successful theatre outside of London, an internationally renowned collection of public art and the site of a medieval priory in Bradwell Abbey.

Seven permanent gallery spaces will be open across Milton Keynes and several temporary exhibitions will be created in Stony Stratford, offering contemporary art and geometric 2d to traditional crafts and work by local artists.

Milton Keynes City Orchestra will be popping up in the city centre (University Centre, John Lewis and MK Gallery), and MK Museum will offer jester workshops, re-enactors and powder/archery demonstrations.

City charities have also produced their own work for display, such as InterAction MK which uses recyled material to make art like the piece pictured above.

Lucy Bedford, arts development officer at the council, said: "The programme is bustling with talks, tours, exhibitions, workshops and artist demonstrations.

"It's been a great strength bringing together arts and heritage through a combined programme."

Anyone who wants to know more about the event, taking place from May 6-15, can pick up a programme from their library or download it from www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/openweekend.

Further details will also be available in MK Life.

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ADVERTISINGFEATURE

Have a green garden by composting

NOW'S the time to get composting.

In Milton Keynes, the council's weekly food and garden waste scheme provides a quick and easy way to get rid of organic waste, but by buying a home composter you can become a greener gardener and help your own garden to thrive.

Making compost at home is an effective way of reducing your waste and producing a rich material to use in your garden.

Compost is an organic material comprising of garden waste and kitchen scraps which have been decomposed to form a rich, soil-like substance.

During the composting process, tiny organisms feed on the waste and multiply, breaking down the organic materials.

Home compost is perfect for encouraging healthy growth of plants, shrubs and flowers or simply for use as a mulch or lawn fertilizer.

If you haven't already started, spring is an ideal time to begin. It can take up to 12 months for the compost to be ready, so by next season you'll have a fresh batch ready to use on the garden.

Spring composting tips for the garden

■ Give your garden a spring clean and empty any old pots before you start planting for the season - don't forget to sterilise them.

■ Any old compost can be put back into the compost bin.

■ Remember to add the right ingredients - a 50/50 mix of 'greens' (tea bags, vegetable peelings, fruit scraps, old flowers, grass cuttings, spent bedding plants) and 'browns' (garden prunings, coffee grinds, tissues and paper napkins, egg boxes, vacuum cleaner dust) makes great compost.

■ You can also put any dead and unwanted leaves and stems into your compost bin and any weed cleared from a pond can be used to combat dry compost.

■ Adding meat, fish or dairy products to your compost bin is not recommended, as this can attract unwanted visitors to your garden.

■ Cooked vegetables and diseased plants should also be kept out as they can spoil your compost mix, put these in your green bin.

■ After nine months to a year your compost will be mature enough to use.

■ You'll know its ready when the compost has turned into a dark, crumbly soil-like substance.

■ Don't forget to keep adding greens and browns to top up the bin as the material at the bottom matures.

■ Spring is the time to prune the hardier members of the shrubbery - the dead and unwanted stems and leaves make a great addition to the compost bin.

■ Household waste is good for composting

■ If you're clearing out old bank statements and bills, why not shred and add them to the compost heap where they will help the composting process by creating air pockets.

■ Don't throw away used tea bags, add them torn up to your compost bin.

■ You could also fill in gaps in your lawn by using grass seeds sown on used tea bags.

■ Coffee grinds, fruit and vegetable peelings are perfect for making good compost.

■ Egg shells can also be composted. These won't decompose but will be crushed into small pieces adding calcium and minerals to the soil.

■ Milton Keynes Council does not sell compost bins directly, but works in partnership with Evengreener which offers low cost bins via its Get Composting website, prices start from £15 plus delivery.

■ You can view and buy the full range of composters, wormeries and water butts at http://www.miltonkeynes, getcomposting.com, or you can access the site from the council's recycling website - www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/recycling.

Click on home composting and follow the link to the Get Composting website.

Mixing it up: You will reap the rewards of having a garden composter

Purchase of black refuse sacks

Milton Keynes Council supplies each household with one roll of black sacks for non-recyclable refuse each year.

From May, black refuse sacks will be available to purchase at £2.60 for a roll of 52 (cash only) from the three Community Recycling Centres located at Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall; North Crawley Road, Newport Pagnell, or Newport Road, New Bradwell.

These are open daily from 8am-8pm, from April to September.

Refuse sacks will no longer be available from Civic Offices, but any brand of black refuse sack purchased from any supermarket, general store or market is accepted.

getcomposting.com

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MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL

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All the runners and riders for next week's local elections

LOCAL elections for Milton Keynes Council will be taking place next week.

Candidates from the main political parties, Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrats, as well as the Green Party, the UK Independence Party and one independent candidate, are fighting for 17 ward seats.

The count takes place at stadiummk on Thursday, May 5.

The list of candidates is as follows:

BLETCHLEY AND FENNY STRATFORD
Paul Bowler (Green)
Susan Burke (Lib Dem)
***Michael Klein (Conservative)**
Adrian Pitfield (UKIP)
Rita Venn (Labour)

BRADWELL
Thomas Curragh (Conservative)
***Robert [Rex] Exon (Lib Dem)**
Judith [Dana] Green (UKIP)
Edward [Ted] May (Green)
Pauline Wallis (Labour)

CAMPBELL PARK
Carol Barac (Green)
Sarah Murphy (UKIP)
James Orr (Conservative)
***Roger [Cec] Tallack (Lib Dem)**
Paul Williams (Labour)

DANESBOROUGH
***David Hopkins (Conservative)**
Arnold [Stuart] Leeming (UKIP)
Valerie Menzies (Lib Dem)
Margaret Woodward (Labour)

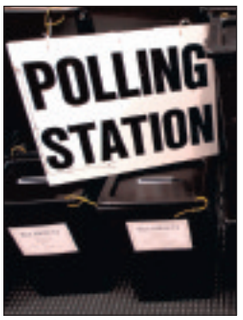
EMERSON VALLEY
Edith Bald (Conservative)
Philip Buckley (Green)
Philip Pinto (UKIP)
Sairam Reddy (Labour)
***Rosemary Snell [Drewett] (Lib Dem)**

FURZTON
Beverley Caprice (Green)
Margaret Geaney (Conservative)
Stuart Moore (UKIP)
John [David] Morgan (Labour)
***Christopher Williams (Lib Dem)**

HANSLOPE PARK
Richard Curtis (Lib Dem)
David Flatman (Labour)
***Andrew Geary (Conservative)**
Graham White (UKIP)

LINFORD NORTH
Brian Barton (Labour and Co-operative)
Helen Davies (UKIP)
Peter Edwards (Green)
***Alan Richards (Lib Dem)**
Anita Rose (Independent)
David Tunney (Conservative)

LINFORD SOUTH
Ronen Ghose (UKIP)



David Howlett (Lib Dem)
Caroline Lancaster (Green)
Robert Middleton (Labour)
Catriona Morris (Conservative)

LOUGHTON PARK
***Ruth Jury (Conservative)**
Catherine Kitchiner (UKIP)
Michael Lovell (Green)
Christopher Thompson (Lib Dem)
Peter Todd (Labour)

MIDDLETON
***John Bint (Conservative)**
John Creaser (Green)
Mohammed Khan (Labour)
Roger Nye (UKIP)
Ozoyah [Tony] Oyakhire (Lib Dem Focus Team)

SHERINGTON
Raymond [Alec] Denman (UKIP)
Donald McLean (Conservative)
***Samuel Potts (Lib Dem Focus Team)**
Alan Price (Labour)

STANTONBURY
Sean Barnes (Lib Dem Focus Team)
Thomas Bulman (Green)
Graham Davison (Conservative)
Harvey Rainbow (UKIP)
***Brian White (Labour)**

STONY STRATFORD
Steven Beaumont (UKIP)
Adrian Dnes (Lib Dem)
Arshad Majid (Labour)
Michael Sheppard (Green)
***Philip Wharton (Conservative)**

WALTON PARK
Lee Barney (Conservative)
Sandra [Jayne] Lindley (UKIP)
***Sarah [Vanessa] McPake (Lib Dem)**
Moriah Priestley (Labour)

WOLVERTON
Alan Francis (Green)
Peter Marland (Labour and Co-op)
Patrick McQuillan (Lib Dem)
Shouket Mirza (Conservative)
Vincent Peddle (UKIP)

WOUGHTON
***Stephen Coventry (Labour)**
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Adejinmi [Jinmi] Macaulay (Conservative)
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Spring clean just the job for town

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

A TOWN has had a spruce-up – with a little help from some friends.

The Town Centre Clean Up in Wolverton targeted the town's main Stratford Road and included a tidy-up of the Bath House Community Centre car park and painting and revarnishing benches in both the square and the entrance to Tesco.

Hanging baskets were provided for businesses and residents and the Wolverton Working Men's Club front garden also had a major tidy.

The volunteers also tidied up a number of empty shops, jet washed signs and pavements by Saxon Bridge and bus shelters were also cleaned by Ad Space.

The huge effort, which was finished on Saturday, April 9, needed the help of many businesses and organisations – a team was supplied from the Probation Service and two volunteers were supplied from Rail Care.

Lunch during the five-day campaign was provided for the volunteers by Verandah Talk restaurant, equipment was supplied from MK Supersavers, tools were given from Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council via CP Locks and the volunteers were kept going with refreshments from Euro Halal and the Working Mens' Club.

Daniel Mullins, from Milton Keynes Council's neighbourhood management team, said: "This was a well-organised and structured community event where the council worked with communities to make a real difference in their neighbourhoods.

"We welcome the approach communties are taking to make a difference and we will continue to support such events."

Wolverton Steering Group, which co-ordinated the clean up, and partners are already planning the Summer Clean Up, this time targeting Church Street.

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A call to get involved in a colourful carnival

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

BUDDING entertainers are being offered the chance to tour the region with award-winning performers.

Brewing Up is an extravagant display put on by Milton Keynes-based carnival arts company Festive Road to celebrate the country's passion for tea.

And city youngsters are now being given the opportunity to perform at some of the most high profile festivals in the south of England, such as the Mayor's Thames Festival in London.

Jessica Ross, 42, is the project manager, designer, artist and performer in the event - and appeared last year as a dancing teacup, *pictured*.

She said: "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"This will see local young people being taught everything they need to know by the very best, and taken by coach to festivals where they will have the time of their lives.

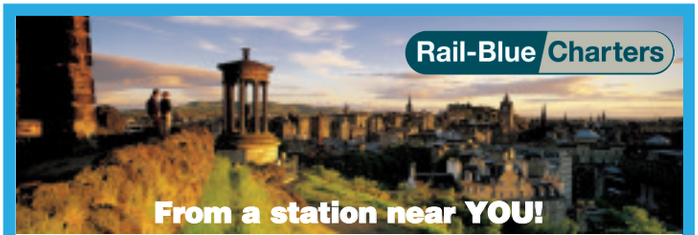
"We're looking for people who want to get involved in dancing, playing instruments and learning about sound technology.

"We're also looking for a couple of people who are good on a BMX bike."

Launched last year, Brewing Up performed at IF: Milton Keynes International Festival 2010 and the Big Picnic in Campbell Park. The performers' costumes were also recently on display at Milton Keynes Gallery's Project Space.

Last year the performers also won awards such as the Olympic Inspire Mark for innovation and high artistic quality and the Most Dynamic Performing Group at Brighton Carnival.

For those who wish to take part there will be a taster session at the URC Hall, above MK Christian Foundation, The Square, Wolverton, on May 7 from 2-4pm, or alternatively visit festiveroad.org.uk.



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Green-fingered designer on trail of a scholarship

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

A BUDDING designer is in the running to win a scholarship from a famous gardener.

Becky Hand, 22, of Woburn, is hoping to win a 12-month vocational scholarship created by award-winning TV gardener Chris Beardshaw.

Competing against 10 other finalists, Becky has been working on her science-themed garden design The Atomic Journey, showing how man discovered the atom, for the past five months.

Her garden will be judged by Chris and other experts at the Malvern Spring Gardening Show in May.

Becky said: "The scholarship provides garden designers with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I'm extremely excited to have reached this stage of the competition.

"I can't wait to see my finished design and to find out whether I'm the successful scholar."

Chris, who has fronted programmes such as Gardeners' World and Country Lives, first began the Chris Beardshaw Mentoring Scholarship (CBMS) in 2007.

He said: "It is a unique vocational scheme which aims to raise the profile of the landscape design industry and highlight just what it takes to become a professional.

"The calibre of this year's finalists has been extremely high so whether they're the successful scholar or not they should all be very proud of their achievements."

The overall winner will also spend a day helping the CBMS team on the Bradstone Fusion Garden – part of the Urban Garden category at this year's Chelsea Flower Show.

Becky Hand with her garden design that has reached the finals.

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Art work: Artist Melanie Watts, *left*, with Kirsty Ternent, from MK Arts for Health, Sue Bertrand, contributor, Helen Taylor, from MK Arts for Health, John Greenall, contributor, Senior Sister Gale Oliver and Matron Lorraine Baker

Health project creates a colourful display for ward

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

A WARD in Milton Keynes Hospital is set to be brightened up with mosaics.

Charity MK Arts for Health has produced the three pieces as part of its MK Underground project, which aims to raise awareness of the ancient history of the city.

They will now be permanently installed in an atrium in ward 22 where patients can reside for several months at a time.

Local mosaic artist Melanie Watts has worked with people of all ages and abilities to make the pieces and participants have included young people and adults with learning difficulties and developmental disorders and members of the Lymphoma Support Group.

Unveiled last Wednesday, patients and visitors will be able to spot different objects, animals and patterns in the mosaics and learn more about the history of the local area.

Arts for Health project manger, Kirsty Ternent, said: "People have really enjoyed making the mosaics with Mel.

"Mosaic is a calming and engaging activity that helps take people's minds away from their problems and concerns and is rewarding because they are contributing to something that will help others staying in hospital."

MK Arts for Health aims to offer people in the community enriching experiences that aid health and well-being and this artwork is part of the larger MK Underground project funded through a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The piece will be installed next month and until then will be on display at the Acorn House Gallery, CMK.

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Lewis Waite, *left*, and friend Craig Whittle at the finishing point of their 268 mile walk

Grandad's cancer prompted fifteen-day walk for charity

A MAN whose grandfather suffered from cancer walked 268 miles to raise £2,000 for charity.

Lewis Waite, 19, from Wolverton, raised the cash for Cancer Research UK by completing a walk from Kirk Yetholm, in Scotland, to Edale in the Peak District with two friends.

It took the SNO!zone worker 15 days to finish the mammoth task, raising a total of £2,024.

He and his friends Craig Whittle and Michael Woolford, both 23, chose to support the charity as they all have family members who have been affected by the disease.

Lewis said: "The walk was the most challenging thing any of us had ever done. We had first planned to do it for enjoyment but when my granddad developed throat cancer and Craig's dad had been struck with liver cancer, we wanted to do it for Cancer Research UK.

"The overall walk was a complete success, unfortunately Michael had to go home four days into the journey due to a twisted knee but Craig and I continued and actually completed the walk two days ahead of schedule.

"Cancer Research UK's work has significantly improved survival rates over the last 30 years and either directly or indirectly, cancer affects everyone so it was really important to us to raise as much money as possible. I'm extremely pleased with the fundraising total, we'd like to thank everyone that supported us – we had great fun along the way."

■ Anyone wanting to support Lewis can still donate online at http://www.justgiving.com/lewis-waite.

MKNEWS BRIEFS

Free kids' dental checks

PARENTS can take their youngsters to free dental drop-in sessions at children's centres from today.

The next drop-in session will be held at Hedgerows Children's Centre, Langland Road, Netherfield, from 1-4pm.

The sessions give the opportunity of a free dental check-up for children who do not currently have an NHS dentist and give their parents the chance to receive general oral health advice and have a chat with an NHS dentist.

Info bus tours schools

SIX secondary schools boarded a bus with a difference when they took part in workshops to find out more about careers and training last week.

The MK Dons Sports and Education Trust took their Dons on Tour bus to schools to host information sessions to help young people think about what their next steps after school could be.

Advisers showed young people how they can use IT to help them apply for jobs and training.

Learning money skills

FIFTY children recently took part in a Barclays Money Skills session to learn how to manage their money including budgeting, spending and saving.

The session with the seven to 11-year-olds took place at the MK Dons' family fun day.

Stepping up for charity

STAFF at Aveda in House of Fraser at thecentre:mk raised £769 for green charity Earth Month on Saturday.

A five-hour challenge saw the company's employees take around 16,000 steps – the equivalent of five miles – on a stepping block.

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Lions are the icing on cake of Easter egg-stravaganza

MK Lions' Vince Macaulay and Ride High's Rachel Medill with some of the children at the charity's second birthday

Above: Foodbank's Minnett Robb, *right*, hands over an Easter egg to Daniell Ennis.
Far left: Children Maypole dancing in Middleton Hall.
Left: Gwyneth Poultry demonstrates some of the street entertainment that was on display at Xscape

A CRACKING time was had by all at some egg-tra special Easter events across the city.

Children at Ride High were treated to a special celebration on Thursday when the chairman of MK Lions basketball team, Vince Macauley, arrived to present a specially made Easter cake to the charity.

Handmade by the chefs at Red Hot World Buffet, the cake stood at two-feet tall and took more than 15 hours to create. It was presented to the charity on its second anniversary.

Shoppers at Middleton Hall in thecentre:mk joined in the Easter fun with a traditional maypole dance, craft workshops and morris dancing as part of the Great British Country Fair. Xscape also put on live street entertainers and a petting zoo for the kids.

Charity The Food Bank were spreading the message of Easter by handing out eggs made from fairly traded chocolate with the Christian message on the box.

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Philip's aiming to bloom in new role

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

A FORMER PA to some of today's best-known politicians has joined a local garden centre.

Philip Woolf has turned over a new leaf and become a flower arranger at Frosts Garden Centre in Woburn Sands.

But before turning to floristry, he worked as a civil servant for nine years for the likes of former cabinet MPs David Blunkett and Jacqui Smith, as well as Britain's first Minister for Children, Margaret Hodge.

Philip, of Houghton Regis, said: "I worked as a private secretary for David Blunkett for around two years, just before he became Education Minister.

"I also worked for Charles Clarke before he went on to become Home Secretary and for Jacqui Smith, who was really nice and really, really interesting.

"I then worked for the Leader of The House Of Lords, Catherine Ashton, which was completely different."

Following his political career, Phil took an 18-month career break and moved to Suffolk with his partner, which is when he discovered his passion for flower arranging and did a degree in professional floristry.

He then set up his own business, providing flowers for high-end weddings, before moving to Bermuda to run a floristry company.

When he returned he arranged flowers for ITV show 60 Minute Makeover on two occasions, before starting work at Frosts in February.

Phil added: "After taking my career break, I never looked back. I guess I'm one of the luckiest people as I've really enjoyed all my jobs."

From parliament to floristry: Philip Woolf

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I was the only Fremantle Trust manager to stay with Excelcare, the three other managers decided to take alternative roles within the Fremantle Trust.

Eight years on, the company is as vibrant as ever. We have four new modern built homes and another to be refurbished. We are working in partnership with the PCT on three small projects offering accommodation or care delivery in our rehabilitation unit at Waterhall Care Centre.

As for me, I am now the Regional Manager working with a dedicated Regional Team to ensure high standards and continued improvement.

Did I make the right choice to give Excelcare a go? I would say, absolutely. **Jackie Blease**

Excelcare in the Milton Keynes Region enjoys good partnership working with local services which fosters good relationships and ultimately can only benefit the people in our care. Recent projects have included...

- ★ Working closely with the Milton Keynes End of Life Team
- ★ *The Gold Standards Framework Accreditation for end of life care*
- ★ *The Care Homes Project with the Tissue Viability Nurses to benchmark and improve on areas around tissue viability within care settings*
- ★ *Our Dementia Strategy, the homes are working towards achieving excellent dementia care*

Councillor Sam Potts, Cabinet Member responsible for Adult Social Care, said: "We really pride ourselves on working with our partners in health and with our communities to achieve the best outcomes for people in Milton Keynes who need support from social care services. I am pleased that our existing good and improving services have been recognised by the Care Quality Commission." **Councillor Sam Potts**

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Tractor latest weapon in fight against crime

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

EVENT organisers are being urged to book a super-secure tractor to help fight crime.

The tractor, an initiative from Thames Valley Police, will be visiting countywide events, including ones in Newton Longville and Buckingham, and can be booked to make further appearances.

The John Deere carries a variety of technology and tags and will be used to demonstrate the benefits of fitting a security marking scheme, as well as tracking and anti-theft devices.

The tractor was the idea of PC Paul Gregory from the Thame neighbourhood team, who said: "It will act as an engagement tool at large countryside events.

"We will fit it with as much security technology as possible and use it to draw people in and allow us to explain why it is vital tractors and other farm equipment is made as secure as possible.

"The average new tractor costs around £60,000 but this can rise to £120,000, which makes it equivalent to an entry-level Porsche 911 or a Bentley.

"Anyone with one of these vehicles would protect them as much as possible, and at the very least fit them with a tracker and anti-theft device and I hope this tractor will allow us to educate people into doing the same with their agricultural vehicles."

Crime fighting tool: The John Deere super-secure tractor, being used to help fight crime in rural communities.

In 2010, 228 plant and agricultural vehicles were stolen in the Thames Valley area and in 2009 there were 254 similar offences.

Last year in England and Wales 1,975 tractors and other agricultural vehicles were stolen at a cost to the NFU Mutual in excess of £10million.

If you would like to request the tractor at an event, e-mail tractor@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk with full details of the event, including times, dates and contact details.

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EVEN THOUGH BANKS ARE STILL CLOSED ON THESE DAYS, SHOPS, PUBS, RESTAURANTS, MUSEUMS AND OTHER PUBLIC ATTRACTIONS REMAIN OPEN.

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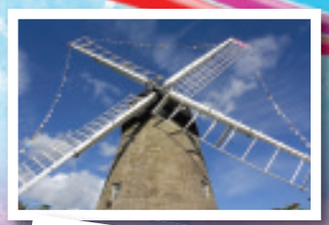
Arts & Heritage OPEN PLACES



6th-15th May 2011

Organisations across the whole of Milton Keynes are coming together to entice families and people all ages to explore something different.

In total, 34 arts & heritage organisations have worked with Milton Keynes Council Arts & Heritage Team to create a 10-day programme, from the 6th-15th May, with more than 200 opportunities to get involved. All events are free or low cost.

Milton Keynes is rich in Arts & Heritage, but do you know where to find it? In Bradwell Abbey there is the site of a medieval priory; central Milton Keynes boasts the most successful Theatre outside of London; and an internationally renowned collection of Public Art.

Arts & Heritage Open Places is inviting you to have a look around at all these places, enjoy some entertainment or take part in an activity.

Seven permanent gallery spaces will be open across Milton Keynes and temporary exhibitions will be created in Stony Stratford, offering you a diverse range from contemporary art and geometric 2-d to traditional crafts and work by local artists.

Milton Keynes City Orchestra will be popping up in the City Centre [University Centre, John Lewis & MK Gallery] with a musical wonder in the form of a perfectly formed quartet and MK Museum will engage its audiences through jester workshops, re-enactors and powder/ archery demonstrations.

"The programme is bustling with talks, tours, exhibitions, workshops and artist demonstrations; it's been a great strength bringing together arts & heritage through a combined programme"

Lucy Bedford,
Arts Development Officer, MKC

If you have an interest in Milton Keynes' arts or heritage or would like to find out more, then pick up a programme from your local library or download a copy from the website www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/openweekend and choose which events to visit.

Arts & Heritage Open Places

6th-15th May 2011

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/openweekend **Tel: 01908 253884**

Go online to download a 10-day programme; and take part in over 200 walks, tours, exhibitions, workshops, concerts, artist demonstrations and re-enactments across Milton Keynes

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MK BUSINESS

Frosts helps to add a splash of colour with wall of plants

BY KIRSTEN RAWLINS
kirsten.rawlins@mk-news.co.uk

A CITY landscaping firm has designed and built Europe's tallest living wall.

The 1,025 square metre wall, created by Frosts Landscape Construction, is at the new Mint Hotel in London.

From design to construction, the wall of 180,000 flowering plants took six months to complete, involving about 20 people from the specialist team at Frosts.

Aidan Lane, commercial director at the Woburn Sands-based firm, said: "We are delighted to have worked on this project that has created the tallest living wall on a building in Europe.

"Living walls are an increasingly popular alternative to stone facades. Everyone wants to see green spaces, not a concrete jungle. But it's very unusual to see this extent of planting on a live building.

"We are thrilled to have been involved in such a landmark project and everyone loves the result.

"This project was a real technical challenge due to its location and height. It's a testament to what is now possible thanks to a well engineered system, greater knowledge and real enthusiasm among clients, architects and contractors."

The company also claims that the plants used to create the wall will last the same amount of time as the building itself. To make sure this happens, Frosts has installed an automatic system into the wall structure, which supplies a perfect combination of water and liquid fertiliser according to the climatic conditions.

And should there be a problem with any of the valves within the system, a text message is automatically sent to Frosts detailing the location, allowing precise corrective action to be taken.

Companies set to face each other in MK's corporate games

THE city could soon have its very own corporate games.

The UK Corporate Games, which were first held in Milton Keynes in the early 90s, saw companies nationwide send teams to compete against each other in different sports while team building.

Now Destination Milton Keynes has decided to find out whether a scaled down MK version would be possible.

In order to host the UK version, a city has to spend £10,000 on a bid and then find another £200,000 to foot the bill if successful.

So to prevent spending this amount, the feasibility of holding a city version is being investigated with the potential for it to grow and become an annual event.

Jackie Inskipp, from Destination Milton Keynes, said: "It's about wanting to do it because it's fun, about getting an identity and team building for your business, in the same way the Dragon Boat race does."

A questionnaire has been released to gauge interest from companies in the city. To get a copy, e-mail jackie.inskipp@destinationmiltonkeynes.co.uk.

MKNEWS BRIEFS

Awards get underway

THE starting gun has been fired for the 2011 Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards, which will be judged later in the year.

Chamber chief executive Rita Spada said: "The launch of the awards is a call to all businesses of all sizes at every stage who believe that they play a significant role in building and supporting their community."

For a full list of all the award categories and details on how to enter, or be a sponsor, visit www.mk-chamber.co.uk.

An event fit for royalty

GREGGS the bakers is launching a search for people that deserve a party fit for a king.

A survey by the company found more than a quarter of people in Milton Keynes usually work bank holidays, so is asking for nominations for neighbours, friends or people in the local community who will be missing out on the royal wedding celebrations.

Winning nominees will receive an impromptu royal party.

Email everyonesinvited@greggs.co.uk, or call 0161 236 2277.

Karen takes on new role

NATIONAL association Solicitors for the Elderly (SFE) has appointed city firm Harvey Ingram Borneos' legal executive Karon Walton as its East Midlands regional co-ordinator.

SFE is an association of lawyers specialising in legal services for older people.

Ms Walton will be responsible for running the SFE's regional branch, covering Bedfordshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

Lunch time in the office

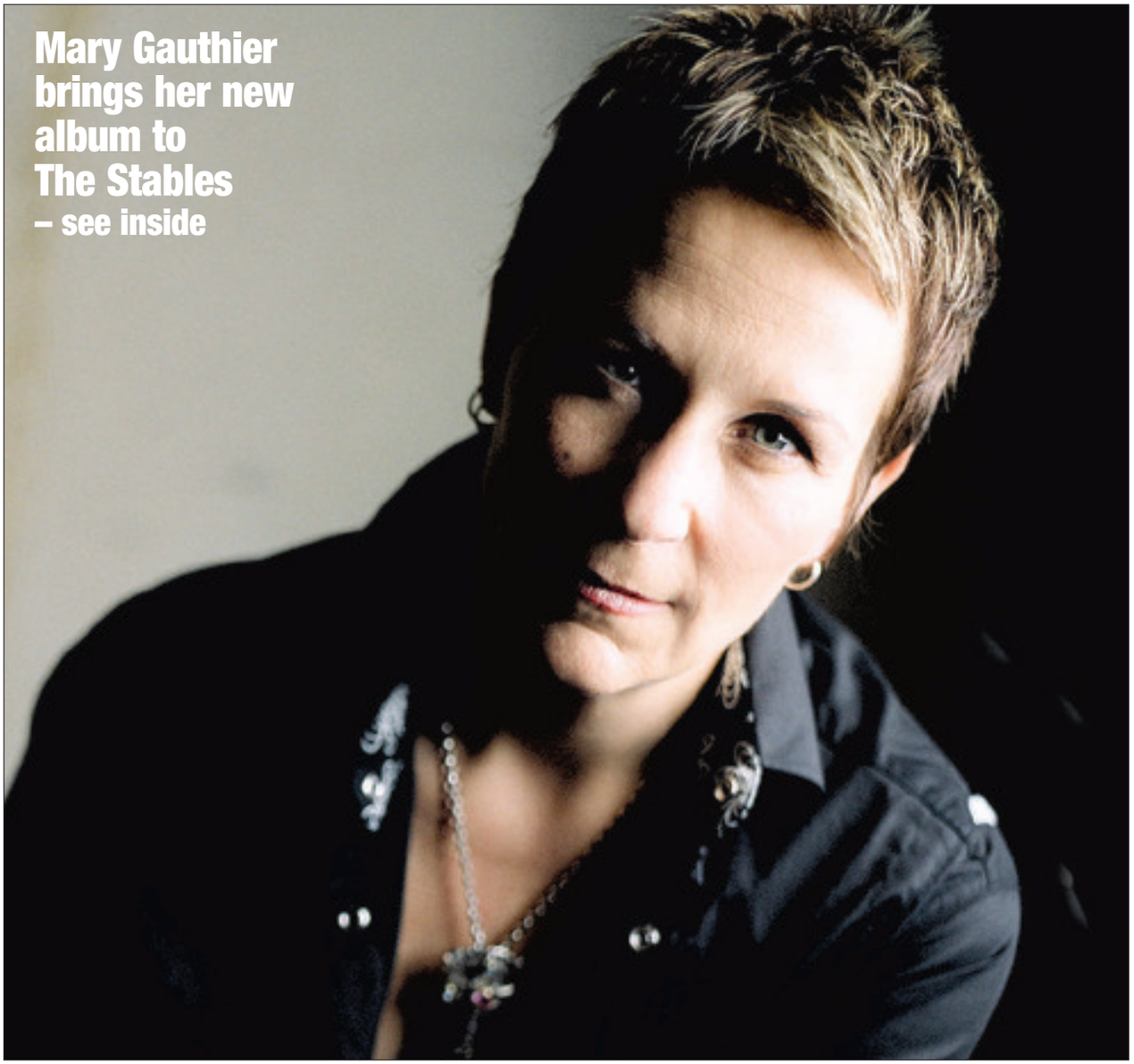
NEW research has revealed 30 per cent of workers in the city are spending their lunch break at their desk every day.

The findings, released as part of The Barn Beefeater Grill Campaign for Proper Lunch, reveal that only 20 per cent of workers were promoted last year.

Also, just six per cent admitted to knowing when their workmates birthdays are, and only 17 per cent could name their colleagues' spouses.

MK LIFE

YOUR GUIDE TO LEISURE IN YOUR CITY



Mary Gauthier brings her new album to The Stables – see inside

INSIDE

Cleopatra - exclusive interview with artistic director **page 35**

PLUS

Simon Darnell reviews the new music releases page 34

WLO perform May Day Proms at Stantonbury Theatre page 35

Kate and Wills go free at Stowe Landscape Gardens page 38

Daily Life - what's on and when in the city page 39

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MKLIFE | MUSIC REVIEW | LIVE MUSIC

SIMON DARNELL

PERSONAL JESUS 2011
Depeche Mode

IF YOU ever find yourself looking for a really awful song. the best thing to do is to look at the singles chart, pick out a track that has the current year tacked onto the end of its title, have a listen and voila!

Almost without exception, the shockingly dire cacophony that'll force its way out of your speakers and into your unfortunate lug-holes will be the smoking remains of a once proud song, considered a classic of its time, but now eviscerated, disembowelled, sterilised and either 'updated for the 21st century' or 'reworked for a new generation'.

Very, very occasionally, the new version stands up on its own two feet (qv Infinity 2008), but this week I'm going to tell you about one that doesn't.

Oh no, it really doesn't.

Now, regular readers will be well aware of my fondness of the music that's come from this band in the past, but I'm not blindly loyal.

I know when I'm being sold a

dud and this is a dud of the highest (or lowest) order.

Let's start with the vocals first.

They're fine. All present and correct.

No problems to report.

Now the tune, oh yes, I really should mention that Stargate have been all over this song like a dropped jar of Bisto.

This is the same act who remixed Toploader's Dancing In The Moonlight and in doing so, namechecked themselves at the start while confidently predicting 'another surefire hit'.

They didn't namecheck Toploader though, which was unfortunate seeing as it was pretty much their only hit, but I digress.

Aside from the fact that the original glam rock-esque, 'guitars and beats ahoy' melody has been thrown in the bin and replaced by a bland, pedestrian dance number, you'd never know anyone had been near it.

That's the problem with this song, y'see.

In 1989, there was nothing else in the Top 40 like it.

Actually, there wasn't even anything in Depeche Mode's back catalogue like it.

What Stargate have done is to strip it of nearly all its individuality and leave behind a hollowed shell of a tune.

Even the keyboard riff has a little tinkly bit, for crying out loud.

This is supposed to be an in-your-face stomper, not a Pop Party filler track.

You know, if this was a terrible remix I could accept that, but it's not terrible, it's boring.

That's far worse.

THE STABLES 01908 280800

STACKRIDGE: DORA'S 40TH BIRTHDAY TOUR
Tomorrow, 8pm

YES, it is the 40th birthday of Dora The Female Explorer! Since then Stackridge have remained etched in the hearts and minds of English music lovers and since they reformed in 2007 their live shows have got even better.
Tickets £16

JAN AKKERMAN
Friday, 8pm

GUITARIST Jan Akkerman combines elements of rock, jazz, blues, classical and modern dance music and gives them his own signature.
Tickets £21.50

WOBURN SANDS BAND
Saturday, 7.30pm

TRUE family entertainment from your favourite local brass band. Soloists from within the band will be featured in this, the 47th concert in the Drakeloe Series.
Tickets £12 (£10 under 16 years)

SOPHIE CLARK AND THE WONDERSMITHS
Saturday, 8.45pm Stage2

A CO-HEADLINING gig featuring two up-and-coming local artists. Sixteen-year-old singer-songwriter Sophie Clark has been writing her own material since the age of 12. The Wondersmiths are a fresh and talented soulful indie band.
Tickets £10 or £12 on the door

Simon Mayor & The Mandolinquents

DERVISH
Sunday, 8pm

DERVISH have been at the forefront of Irish traditional music for two decades.
Tickets £16

MARY GAUTHIER
Tuesday, 8pm

AFTER six albums of original songs, a harvest of music industry awards and covers of her songs, Mary Gauthier tours with her new album The Foundling.
Tickets £15

MARTIN SIMPSON
Wednesday, May 4, 8pm

GUITARIST Martin Simpson's songs are beautifully written and unusual in form, telling true stories and dealing with themes of love, loss, home and more.
Tickets £16.50

SIMON MAYOR & THE MANDOLINQUENTS
Thursday, May 5, 8pm

BRITAIN'S first modern mandolin quartet, with the superb voice and mandobass of Hilary James.
Tickets £16

JAMES HUNTER
Friday, May 6, 8pm

JAMES Hunter delves further into the realm of deep soul in a set of all-original material. He has him opened for Etta James, Boz Scaggs and Aretha Franklin.
Tickets £17.50

WILTON HALL 01908 372277

THE FRANKI VALLI TRIBUTE SHOW
Friday, 7.30pm

THE Frankie Valli Tribute Show transports you single-handedly through Frankie's musical career, from 'Sherry' with the Four Seasons back in 1962, through the 60s and 70s as both solo artist and as lead vocalist with the Four Seasons.
Tickets £23

DIRTY DANCING TRIBUTE
Saturday, 7.30pm

IT'S the summer of 1962 at the Kellermans. Meet Baby and Johnny as they present all those sexy moves in their quest to win the Kellerman Dance Contest.
Tickets £25

ABBA TRIBUTE
Saturday, May, 7.30pm

ARRIVAL UK will bring back your memories of the ABBA era, with songs such as the Eurovision winner Waterloo, through to the haunting sounds of Fernando, then back to the toe tapping favourites Dancing Queen and Take a Chance on Me.
Tickets £25

SUPREME SOUL
Friday, May 13, 7.30pm.

DIANE Shaw – renowned for her Tamla Motown tribute show, incorporating the very best from the legends of soul, northern and modern soul, as well as disco classics.
Tickets £23

80S REINVENTED PARTY NIGHT
Saturday, May 14, 7.30pm

PLAYING all your favourites from throughout the 1980s, so come join us for an 80s nostalgic night.
Tickets £25

Booking essential for all events. Call 01908 372277.

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MK THEATRE 0844 871 7652

CLEOPATRA

Tuesday-Saturday, May 3-7

NORTHERN Ballet returns to the city next week with its interpretation of the life of one of history's most famous women. MK NEWS spoke to artistic director David Nixon OBE about the inspiration, the dances and the production.

"EVERYBODY asks me 'why Cleopatra?' and I just say to them, 'why not?'

"It was in my head for a long time because it's a great story, it has a woman in the title role and a lot of what we do has men in the title role, and also she's a very strong character.

"A lot of people know of the character, but not the specific stories of her life. Many know the stories of her but in relation to Julius Caesar or Mark Antony.

"I was free to go with my imagination because the expectation was not as strong as productions like Wuthering Heights for example, where people expect the story to be transferred exactly to the stage.

"Audiences can tend to forget that a ballet is an expression of what you have to say about a piece. It's a different way of looking at stories and when it isn't one that is so well known the audience is more receptive to what you do. The story is Cleopatra's story, with the highlights of her life.

"It starts with her conjuring up the snake god, when she wants to take her own life. Then he sees her whole life and we go into the stories of what has happened to her.

"There are the moments with Caesar and Antony, but they are only told as moments in her life.

"The set is very clean and bright and open. We've created a very contemporary feel of Egypt that changes through projections. There's a lot of colour in the costumes, and they are very exposed dancers, so to speak - I wanted to show them for what they are. Surprisingly, we've had more young male members of the audience for this show.

"The key is, it's a great show - we've had constant reactions from the audiences that tell us that. It's not just a ballet, it's a show about Cleopatra."

WALKING FESTIVAL

THE Parks Trust's walking festival gets underway this weekend and with more than 20 walks on offer there is something for all abilities over the four-day bank holiday.

On Friday you have a choice of seven, starting with a five-mile round trip between Great Linford Manor and Newport Pagnell, leaving at 9.30am.

Described as medium paced, you get the chance to stop off for a cuppa in Newport before heading back. Meet at Artworks car park in Great Linford.

Those who enjoy a faster pace can try the Nordic Walking Taster. The cost is £3 and the meeting place is Campbell Park Pavillion at 10am.

Starting at the same time you could choose the eight-mile trek on the North Bucks Way. This walk falls into the hard category. The meeting point is Secondary School car park.

Also starting at 10am will be the easy Stony health fun walk, meeting in Mill Lane opposite Prospect Road.

At 1.30pm you could choose the medium paced four-mile trip from Furzton to Howe Park Wood, meeting in the car park across from the Bowl on the V4.

To celebrate the royal big day, dust off your old wedding dress and walk through Campbell Park. Starting at 2pm, the cost is £3 and bridesmaids are welcome too.

The last walk of the day will be one for all the singles out there. So if you're looking to meet new people and make new friends join the stroll at Wolverton Mill car park at 7pm, cost £3.

There's no let-up on day two, starting with another Nordic taster in Campbell Park at 10am - the cost is £3. Nordic not for you? Then maybe five-and-a-half miles round Ouzel Valley park is just the job. Meet at the Marina car park in Peartree Bridge at 10am.

A Bletchley health walk is planned around Waterhall at 11am, meeting in the Irish Club car park.

Stony Stratford is the venue for Saturday's hard walk of seven miles, starting from Watermill Lane off the Stratford Road at 2pm.

At the same time you could discover the Roman history of Loughton Valley. The cost is £3 and the meeting point is the car park in Cocstantine Way, Bancroft Park.

Day three may be Sunday but their is no lay in.

The Dawn Corus walk takes in some bird watching around Willen Lake at a cost of £3. Meet at the Peace Pagoda car park at 5.30am, but there is always the option of breakfast afterwards.

Mid-morning is dog walking time in one of the regular Waggy Walks where you can enjoy some time with the pooch while in Shenley Wood. Meet in the car park of V2 at 10am, cost is £1 per dog.

Nordic folk are at it again in Campbell Park at 10am for walk number 15 in the programme.

MK Ramblers get in on the act with a nine-mile hike from Woburn around the park and Milton Byran. You should take along a packed lunch and enough refreshments for a day out. Meet at 9.45am in Woburn car park.

Shenley Wood is the starting point for another hard walk of seven miles to Tatenhoe and back, meeting in the car park at 1pm.

Sunday's final event is a friendly trip for those in a wheelchair or with walking difficulties, which will take in Willen. Meeting in the Peace Pagoda car park at 2pm, the cost is £3.

Bank Holiday Monday begins with another Nordic Walk in Campbell Park, starting at 10am at the Pavillion and costing £3.

At 10am you have a choice of two hard walks - one of seven miles along the Ouzel Valley meeting at Campbell Park Pavillion, or the eight miles of Whaddon Chase, staring point at Hazeley Secondary School.

A gentle walk around Great Linford and the old Railway Walk is planned for 11am, meeting at The Giffard Park pub car park.

The Parks Trust knows how to save the best to last. You can take in some great views on the four-mile Photography Walk from the Tree Cathedral to Woolstone.

Take along your camera and meet in the car park in Livingstone Drive, adjacent to Gulliver's Land, at 2pm, cost £3.

Further details of The Parks Trust Walking Weekend can be found at www.theparkstrust.com.

STANTONBURY CAMPUS THEATRE 01908 324422

MAY DAY PROMS CONCERT

Sunday, 7.30pm.

YOU can enjoy an evening of all the classic proms with The Wolverton Light Orchestra (WLO), under the musical direction of Mike Crofts.

The WLO draws on the wealth of talented musicians from the surrounding area and has built up a well deserved reputation for giving you an evening of entertainment, including light classics and opera, selections from shows, film music and orchestral 'pops'.

Their May Day concert will feature the full orchestra, as well as guest performers.

The programme will include many family favourites and well-known tunes for everybody to enjoy, with proceeds from the concert going towards charity.

Tickets, costing £10 (concessions £7.50), are available from 01296 715557, or www.stantonbury.org.uk.

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MKANNOUNCEMENTS

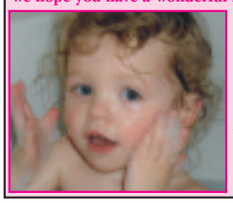
Birthdays

HANNAH FIGG
Happy 18th Birthday on 23rd April 2011.
Lots of love from Mum, Dad, Gemma, Nana and Grandad xxxxx

RAJAN CHANA
Happy 18th Birthday
Have a fantastic Birthday!
Lots of Love Dad, Mum & Parveen xxx

Daddy's Princess is now 21
NICOLA GURNHILL
'Nikki'
Happy Birthday
Lots of love Mum, Dad & Michael xxx

Happy 2nd Birthday NIAMH
25th April 2011
We hope you have a Wonderful Birthday Angel



With lots of love always from Mummy, Nanny, both of your Grandads, Auntie Louisa, Auntie Michaela and all the family xxxxxxx

IVANO CAPARCO
Congratulations on your 18th Birthday

Love Mum, Dad, Rivo, all the family and friends

In Memoriam

JACK WESLEY
Who died 24th April 1999
Memories of a beloved Husband, Much loved Father, grandfather and Great Grandfather. Always in our hearts and thoughts. Sadly missed.
Marjorie, Marcelline, Bernard and all the family

PAUL MASON
24th April 2002
It's been a long time since you left us, and we love and miss you every day. You will live on in our hearts forever and never fade away.
God bless Paul
Mum, Margaret-Ann and Shaun.

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the stables

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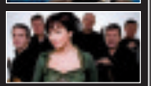
Tickets £15

Thursday 28 April, 8pm
STACKRIDGE
Celebrating the 40th anniversary of their first single release, expect new material plus old favourites.
Tickets £16

Friday 29 April, 8pm
JAN AKKERMAN
A powerhouse of a guitarist who has done it all, Jan Akkerman combines world-class improvisation with rock, blues, jazz and more!
Tickets £21.50



Sunday 1 May, 8pm
DERVISH
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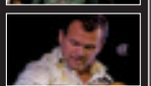
Tickets £16



Wednesday 4 May, 8pm
MARTIN SIMPSON
Martin is an established acoustic performer and his songwriting has been critically acclaimed, winning several Radio 2 folk awards.
Tickets £16.50

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ANN 30, slim, attractive, dark features, solvent, missing romance and love in my life, seeking genuine male for companionship, mutual spoiling. **Tel No: 0906 199 8100 Box No: 357155**

EASYGOING honest female 30, slim, blue eyed and new to this, seeks spontaneous male with plenty of spare time. Any age/status/race. **Tel No: 0906 199 8100 Box No: 358285**

JOYCE attractive 40's feminine lady, loves good times in/out looking for likeminded younger male for fun times. Can accommodate/travel. **Tel No: 0906 199 8100 Box No: 362859**

CURVY blue eyed brunette, attractive and fit. I'm a young looking and active 43yrs, varied interests. WLTM mature male with GSOH who knows how to treat a lady, 40 – 70yrs. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 199 8100 Box No: 355775**

LOOKING for relaxation and fun? Attractive 49yr old nurse waiting to raise the temperature of broad-minded, fun companion! **Tel No: 0906 199 8100 Box No: 361355**

BLONDE blue eyed single female, 34, discreet, OHAC, looking for fun friendship with confident man, 38-60 wanting fun times also. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 199 8100 Box No: 362863**

BEAUTIFUL brunette, slim with curves in all the right places seeking male to share special intimate fun times together. Can travel/accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 199 8100 Box No: 364875**

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TASTE LIFE

BLACK HORSE

Bedrod Street, Woburn
01525 290210

YOU could be forgiven for being fooled that The Black Horse in Woburn is a little pub.

Smack in the heart of the village, this 18th century coaching inn has a tiny frontage but the inside of a Tardis.

The small bar gives way to a large and lively dining area and outside is a lovely secluded courtyard garden.

The staff typify the friendly atmosphere as they smile their way around the busy Friday night tables in an efficient and professional manner, serving top quality food.

The menu is uncomplicated with a wide, rather than vast, selection and all the produce is sourced with great care.

For a starter my dinner guest and I choose to mix and match, picking the soup of the day, carrot and cumin, and the local venison carpaccio.

The soup was a joy as the spice engulfed the creamy delight of the fresh carrot.

The raw venison was complimented beautifully with peppery rocket and truffle oil. Two spoons, two forks and two happy diners.

Choosing from the daily special board I tucked into pork osso buco. The slow cooked hock was served on a bed of mustard mash and was coated in a very rich, maybe a little too rich, port and apple sauce. That said the meal was wonderful.

My partner picked Dover sole served with new potatoes and a delightful salad of leaves.

The fish was perfectly cooked and the accompanying sauce was adjusted to her requirements without a fuss.

Thinking that we may never be able to eat another morsel we grabbed the dessert menu and ordered.

At this juncture may I announce my dislike for those people who look at your plate and decide that what you have ordered is what they want, despite having the chance to order it for themselves.

Choosing the apple tarte tatin my mistake was to allow my guest to taste it.

Pudding plates were exchanged and I tucked, begrudgingly, into a trio of lovely dairy ice cream while the tarte vanished.

Those actions alone tell you, just a little, about how good the food is in this gem of a place.

This Friday The Black Horse will be celebrating William and Kate's wedding with royal breakfasts, lunches, afternoon teas, a barbecue and live music in the bar from 9pm to raise money for Help for Heroes.

HEART FM COLUMN

WELCOME to our new column.

We're Stuart and Natalie from Heart Breakfast and it's our job to wake you up each weekday morning from 6-10am with showbiz gossip, amazing prizes and more music variety.

In this column we'll talk showbiz, sharing with you interviews with the stars and snippets that never made it to air.

We love to hear great stories, not only from the world of showbiz but from you, who can definitely give the stars a run for their money with interesting tales.

This week we talked accidental nudity, those Janet Jackson-type wardrobe malfunctions that leave you red faced.

It came about after Natalie met her boyfriend's parents and ended up giving them more than an eyeful when the zip on her dress failed.

We were surprised to hear so many similar stories, including Chris the swimming instructor who got undressed pool side while completely forgetting his trunks.

EARLY BIRDS: Stuart and Natalie

This week we caught up with country legend Dolly Parton, who is touring this August. We asked her for some marriage tips for Wills and Kate.

"I don't think my marriage would apply to them, the reason my marriage works is I stay gone."

Her stage outfits also come in three different sizes. "We have great caterers so I like to have a bit of stretch, depending on how much fun we're having."

Comedian Omid Djali also told us about his plans for a new tour.

He plays at Milton Keynes Theatre on January 17, 2012 and even promised to use one of our gags.

Listen for the one about scrapbooking and you'll know who to blame.

Finally, love is in the air on Friday and to celebrate we're giving away a romantic holiday to Corfu on the show this week.

Stuart and Natalie present Heart Breakfast Monday to Friday from 6-10am on Heart 103.3FM and www.heart.co.uk.

NATIONAL TRUST

STOWE LANDSCAPE GARDENS

Friday, 10.30am-5.30pm.

ARE you called Wills or Kate and do you fancy a free day out?

To celebrate the royal wedding, The National Trust are offering you a free entry to the beautiful landscape gardens at Stowe.

So if you are called Catherine or William all you have to do, to get in for nothing, is take along some photo identification with your name on.

David Brooks, property manager for the National Trust at Stowe, said: "The extra public holiday is a great opportunity for anyone to get outdoors in the spring air.

"The gardens are a great place to have a picnic and enjoy beautiful views of the pretty lakes and wooded valleys. Here at Stowe, there is plenty of space for families to run around in. I see lots of people running around, playing hide and seek and rolling down hillsides - and that's just the mums and dads."

To find out more log onto www.nationaltrust.org.uk/stowegardens, or call 01280 822850.

DAILY LIFE

TOMORROW

The White Horse, Stony Stratford. Kent Duchaine Stony's favourite American bluesman (and his 80-year-old National Steel guitar) return. Ripping bottle-neck guitar, rocking blues classics, great anecdotes about ex-wives and a dynamic performance. Starts 9pm.

FRIDAY

The Living Room, The Hub are holding a Royal Wedding Fayre from 10am-5pm in aid of Musclar Dystrophy Campaign. Further details at www.thelivingroom.co.uk.

SATURDAY

Wyevale Garden Centre, Woburn Sands. Representatives from Royal Canin and Burgess will be hosting a free advice sessions for pet owners as part of National Pet Month. During opening hours.
Further details at www.woburnsandsgardencentre.co.uk.

Tai Chi, Willen Lake North. In aid of World Tai Chi day take part in a session at the Peace Pagoda. Booking is essential, please call 01908 253229. Price £2, all ages welcome.

May Day Festival, Campbell Park. Following the success of last year's festival The Parks Trust bring you another day of traditional May Day celebrations. Free, 11am-4pm.

Barn Dance, Campbell Park. Put on your dancing shoes and join The Parks Trust for a good old barn dance with a live band and a bar. Traditional hog roast included in the ticket price. Music and calling provided by local Ceilidh band Asha.
Costs £17.50, starts 7.30pm. Booking required, visit www.theparkstrust.com.
White Horse, Stony Stratford. Nexus, a four-piece blues rock band playing covers and originals. Their varied set includes Gary Moore, Free, Bad Company, Cream and ZZ Top, plus a few surprises. Powerful and entertaining, this band doesn't hold back. Start 9pm.

Craufurd Arms, Wolverton. Heart of a Coward supports Floods, Brides, Golden Tanks and Captain Dread. A five-piece, alternative metal groove band, they offer both heavy, pounding riffs cleverly mixed with powerful melodic choruses. Starts 7.30pm, tickets £6, 14+.

Bletchley Railway Club.The Curvy Love Dogz play for the first time at the club. This promises to be the start of a new lease of life for the club as it moves towards becoming a regular music venue.
Entry £3, families and non-members welcome, starts 9pm.

The Grebe, Great Holm. Come and celebrate the Royal Honeymoon with Big Cheeze, it's party time for the serf's. One set of classic rock and one set of classic AC/DC. Free, 9pm.

SUNDAY

Bank Holiday Monday Parks and Run, Willen Lake North. Enjoy a run in the park with this Parks Trust event. Meet at the Peace Pagoda car park at 10am.

TUESDAY

Stony Stratford Floral Club, Catholic Church Hall, Stony Stratford.
Monthly demonstration of flower arrangements. Club offers interest, friendship and enjoyment. All welcome, 7.30pm.

Meditation Classes. Overcome stress, handle daily problems, develop a more peaceful state of mind with meditation sessions at Willen Pavillion. All welcome, 7.30pm. Costs £5 per session. For more details go to www.meditation-nagarjuna.org, or ring Nagarjuna Buddhist Centre on 01604 686778.

Naidni Restaurant, Wolverton Road, Stony Stratford. Curry dinner with quiz in aid of Rett Syndrome Association and Willen Hospice. Costs £15 per person, 8pm. Further details at curryclub.awardspace.com. Advance booking essential, e-mail StonyCurryClub@hotmail.com.

WEDNESDAY

Stony Stratford Fiddle Club, Penn House, Mill Lane, Stony Stratford. A friendly, informal club for fiddlers to meet, chat, and play. Bring a fiddle and join in. Starts at 8pm. For more details contact Andrew Metcalfe on 01908 265365, or 07790 225095.

Craufurd Arms, Wolverton. Jody Has A Hitlist supported by Lecarla, Hogan and One More Year. A four-piece pop punk rock band from Dublin. Starts 7.30pm, tickets £4, 14+.

Tell MK NEWS readers about YOUR event

- Do you have a fundraising event that you would like to publicise?
- Does your club have regular meetings that you want to tell others about?
- Do you run a pub that holds live music, comedy or has a special event coming up?
- Are you a member of a church or multi-faith group with a special service soon?

Send details to andy.handley@mk-news.co.uk, or call 01908 689586.
Remember to get the details to us at least two weeks before the event and we will publish them, space permitting.

MK GALLERY

MK GALLERY

Tomorrow, 6.45pm
Dancing Brick and Caroline Devine

THE two most recent recipients of the Milton Keynes Community Foundation Arts Bursary present ideas and early work-in-progress from their latest performance collaboration Captain Ko and the Planet of Rice.

This new theatre piece is the company's response to our anxiety towards ageing and our fear of forgetting, told through the poetic prism of science fiction. It is about recordings, memory and frontiers.

It is a study into neurological diseases such as Alzheimer's and how humans cope when faced with these strange realities.

Expect snippets of sound, images and performance from what promises to be a poignant and beautiful new play.

Entrance free, donations welcome.

Leisure or events news? e-mail **leisure@mk-news.co.uk** | phone **01908 689595**

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Restaurant of the Month

Murrays at Whittlebury Hall

MURRAYS at Whittlebury Hall is a hidden gem that offers a truly memorable dining experience.
Boasting two AA Rosettes, the fine dining restaurant provides an intimate and relaxing venue to enjoy a seasonal, modern menu by its new award-winning head chef Damyan Stefanov.
He said: "We are proud to use the finest carefully sourced quality seasonal and local ingredients. Using our creativity we are able to bring you simple and elegant dishes.
Our style could be described as modern British with international influences and classical based cookery, with contemporary twists and touches.
All food, from the appetisers to the desserts are produced in-house from carefully created recipes, no dish is left to chance."
The experience starts in the hotel's lounge area with your reserved settee, complete with name plaque, where your waiter delivers your drinks and canapés, on this occasion beetroot tapioca and smoked salmon with caviar - a pleasant touch.
The restaurant is classical with white table clothes and candles - all that was missing was a piano playing in the background. It is named after the famous Formula 1 commentator Murray Walker and many of his amusing anecdotes are displayed on the walls
The restaurant picked up The Foodie award for Northamptonshire for the third year running in 2010, following votes from delighted diners.
And I am not surprised after sampling some of the delicious food on offer.
A selection of warm fresh bread, including wholegrain mustard and cheese, kicked off the meal.
This was followed by a starter of scallops and pork belly with apple and crackling, before a palate cleansing coconut foam.
Next came the main course of melt-in-the-mouth 35 day dry aged beef fillet with onions, mushrooms and horseradish - the highlight of the meal - and rhubarb cheesecake with a twist for dessert.
And all this was rounded off with coffee accompanied by delicious handmade petits fours.
The meals were full of flavour and creatively presented to look as mouth-watering as they tasted. And they were perfectly complimented by an extensive list of wines from around the world.
The staff were professional at all times and very attentive. If you are looking to take a friend or partner for a treat then you could easily consider visiting for the service alone. We were made to feel very special.
Overall, the food, service and atmosphere were brilliant and certainly put the word 'fine' into fine dining.
Murrays, which has a dress code of smart/casual and no jeans, is open Tuesday to Saturday between 7pm and 9.30pm. To book your fine dining experience call 0845 400 0001.

Murrays
AT WHITTLEBURY HALL

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To begin...

Main dishes...

To finish...

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Additional benefits include air conditioning to the living room and master bedroom, gas heating, double glazing, good size rear garden, off-road parking for two cars and a detached double garage.

Early viewing is advised via the vendor's sole agent, Christopher Rose Property Consultants, on 01908 904222.

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- Utility Room
- Sitting Room
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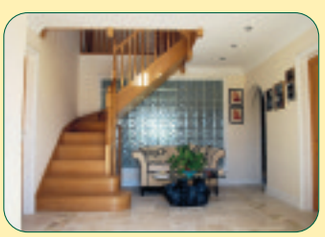

A substantial individual detached family home enjoying a prominent position in the heart of the village. Situated on a plot of approximately 2.75 acres the property was built to a high standard with well proportioned accommodation over three floors and comprises the following:

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- Shower Room
- Drawing Room
- Dining Room
- Sitting Room
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room
- Utility Room
- Study
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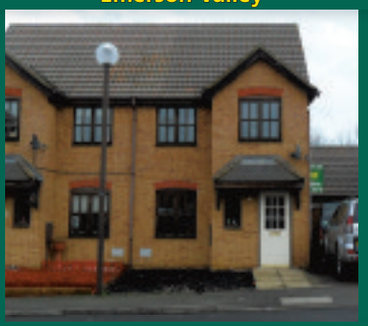

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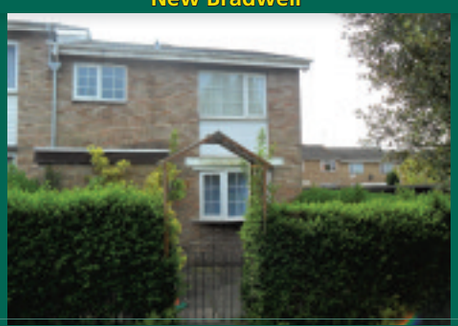

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■ Bathroom ■ Parking ■ Rear garden

Bradwell Common £995 PCM PF

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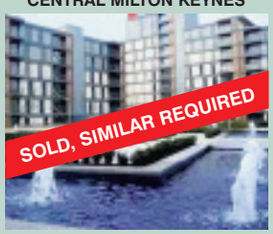

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HEAD OF SCIENCE TLR 1a (£10,702) + recruitment allowance
We are looking for a Head of Science to lead our Science Department. In addition to the above we are able to offer a recruitment and retention allowance of £2000 which is available in year 2 and 3.

CO-ORDINATOR OF SCIENCE at the Olney Campus TLR 2b (£4,225)
We are looking for a Co-ordinator of Science at our Olney Campus. Chemistry is under represented in the Science Department.

TEACHER OF GIRLS PE MPS
In addition to a broad and varied core curriculum, GCSE, BTEC and A-level P.E. are popular options and a large number of students gain Sports Leadership awards. The successful candidate will be expected to contribute to our extensive extra-curricular programme. Applications from colleagues new to the profession are most welcome.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced CRB will be required.

If you want to join our school, details and an application form are available on our website www.ousedale.org.uk via email to recruitment@ousedale.org.uk or by applying to Mrs Sue Carbert, Headteacher at the address shown below.

Closing date: 4 p.m. Monday 9th May 2011

The Grove, Newport Pagnell, Bucks, MK16 0BJ
Tel: 01908 210203 Fax: 01908 216574 E-mail: recruitment@ousedale.org.uk

Headteacher: Mrs S Carbert

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For further details about the role please contact Chris Hunter on 07503 051768 or Andrea Williams on 01234 312432.

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Closing date: 2nd May 2011

Registered Charity Number: 222377

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

New Chapter Primary School

Chapter, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes MK6 5EA

Headteacher

Required for September 2011/January 2012
Group 2 L18 – L24

New Chapter is a primary school committed to providing children with an excellent education that will both enhance and enrich their lives.

We are looking for a talented Headteacher with the ambition and drive needed to lead the school from special measures to one that is providing an outstanding education.

This role will bring both challenge and reward. Experience of raising standards of teaching, learning and achievement are crucial, as is the ability to motivate children and staff to fulfil their potential.

With excellent leadership skills you will build on recent improvements by bringing to life a vision for the school, embedding effective practices and developing a vibrant curriculum. As a champion of children and their learning you will have a significant impact on both the future of our children and our school.

Visits to the school are warmly welcomed. Please contact Alison Hedges on 01908 679809 to make an appointment.

For an application pack please contact Jenny Cooper on 01908 253116 or email jenny.cooper@milton-keynes.gov.uk For an informal discussion about the post, please contact Michelle Currie, Chair of the IEB on 01908 677954.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects everyone involved with the school to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to obtain an Enhanced Disclosure from the CRB.

Closing date: 12 noon Tuesday, 17th May 2011.
Interviews will be held: Tuesday 24th May 2011.

MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL

Learning, Love and Laughter

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www.woodend.org.uk
Headteacher: Jacqueline A Baron B.Ed, M.A.

MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL

We are a small community school with friendly, supportive staff. If you would like to visit us before applying for any of the below opportunities, please contact the school to make an appointment.

Midday Supervisors

Post one – 6 hours, 40minutes per week over 5 days, 11.55am - 1.15pm, term-time only

Pay Scale: MK2 .7, £1,937 pa

Post two – 3 hours per week over 2 days (Tuesday and Wednesday, 11.45am - 1.15pm), term-time only

Pay Scale: MK2.7, £861 pa

You will supervise the children eating their lunch and playing on the playground.

Breakfast Club Assistant

Pay Scale: MK5, £2,498 pa

6 hours, 25 minutes per week over 5 days, 7.45am - 9am, term-time only

You will assist the Club Leader on a daily basis, providing breakfast and supervising the children.

To request an electronic application pack, please email the school office. To request a hard copy application pack, please send a stamped addressed envelope to the school.

Closing date: 3pm, 11 May 2011.

Interviews: 16 May 2011.

We are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of our children.

All appointments will be subject to a full CRB disclosure.

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE It's ability, not disability that counts

We are an Equal Opportunities Employer.

At Milton Keynes, we're supporting the growth of our vibrant city while continuing to deliver excellent services. It's an exciting place to be and we're keen to get the balance right – including the work-life balance. So if you're looking for family friendly benefits and the chance to make a difference, make a move to MKC.

MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL

PEC South is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Mathematics Teacher – PEC South

Main Pay Scale + 2 SEN + possible TLR **Ref: 50016494**

We seek to appoint an enthusiastic, talented mathematics teacher to our highly successful Personalised Education Centre. The ability to motivate vulnerable young people presently not in mainstream education is essential, as is the ability to teach to GCSE level.

Lead Teacher – PEC South

Main Pay Scale + TLR2 + 2 SEN **Ref: 50016492**

Required as soon as possible an enthusiastic, highly-motivated teacher, to lead teaching and learning within our highly successful Personalised Education Centre.

The person appointed must have a proven record of achieving results both academic and social, with vulnerable young people currently not in mainstream education.

The ability to teach a range of subjects to GCSE level is desirable but not essential.

Closing date for both roles: 15 May 2011.

Interview date: Week commencing: 23 May 2011.

For informal enquiries for both roles, please contact Shelley Mahoney on 01908 368268.

These posts are subject to safer recruitment practices.

To apply online, please visit www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/jobs-careers

For an application form, please email jobs@milton-keynes.gov. uk If you have a hearing impairment and have access to Minicom, please phone 01908 252727 (office hours only).

Please quote appropriate reference. Salaries will normally start at the first point of the grade. We are unable to accept CVs, unless accompanied by a completed application form.

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MK PEC South

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MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL

The Central Personalised Education Centre (PEC) works as part of MK Behaviour Partnership to offer education placements for students unable to attend mainstream school for a variety of reasons.

Inclusive Education Co-ordinator – Central PEC

£17,802 - £21,519 (£15,102 - £18,255 pro rata, term-time) **Ref: 50012597**

As a key member of the CPEC team, you will work alongside teachers to support students to achieve in education. Our aim is to reintegrate students to mainstream school or engage them in education, training and employment post-16.

Skilled in motivating young people to succeed and willing to learn, you will have good communication skills, together with NVQ Level 2 or equivalent.

Administration Assistant – Central PEC

£15,725 - £18,453 (£13,682 - £16,056 pro rata, term-time) **Ref: 50017866**

You will provide quality secretarial and administrative support to the Senior Administrator, Centre Manager and the team in order to assist with the smooth and efficient running of the Centre.

Your outstanding organisational and IT expertise will be matched by excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Although team orientated, you will be self-motivated and work well independently in a challenging, but fulfilling environment.

This role is currently delivered by Milton Keynes Council. There may be a possibility in the future this role could be Tupe Transfered to Mouchel.

Closing date for both posts: 15 May 2011.

For informal enquiries regarding either of the above posts, please contact Kirsty Brice on 01908 679932.

These posts are subject to safer recruitment practices.

To apply online, please visit www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/jobs-careers
For an application form, please email jobs@milton-keynes.gov.uk

If you have a hearing impairment and have access to Minicom, please call 01908 252727 (office hours only).

Please quote appropriate reference. Salaries will normally start at the first point of the grade. We are unable to accept CVs, unless accompanied by a completed application form.

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Public Notices

LICENSING ACT 2003
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE/CLUB PREMISES CERTIFICATE

NOTICE is hereby given that FRANK McMAHON has applied to THE LICENSING AUTHORITY AT MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL for a PREMISES LICENCE at PINK PUNTERS NIGHTCLUB, 2 WATLING STREET, FENNY STRATFORD MK22BS. The following licensable activities are proposed during the following times:

Late Night Refreshments:-
Mon – Wed 19:00 – 01:00
Thur – Sun 19:00 – 07:00
Supply of Alcohol:-
Mon – Wed 19:00 – 01:00
Thur – Sun 19:00 – 07:00
Regulated Entertainment*:-
Mon – Wed 19:00 – 01:00
Thur – Sun 19:00 – 07:00

*Regulated entertainment to include:provision of film, indoor sporting event, performance of recorded and live music, performance of dance, provision of facilities for making music, provision of facilities for dancing.

Full details of the application can be viewed via The Licensing Register at the Civic Offices of the Council. This is accessible Mondays to Thursday between the hours 9am to 5pm, and Fridays 9am to 4pm (excluding bank holidays) or online at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/licensing.

Any interested party (such as a resident or local business) or responsible authority wishing to make representations either against or in support of the application must do so in writing by 14th May 2011 to the following address: Licensing Team, Environment Directorate, Milton Keynes Council, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ, 01908 252800, e-mail: licensing@miltonkeynes.gov.uk.

Representations received in response to this review will ordinarily be made available for public inspection, including disclosure to the applicant and any relevant responsible authorities unless agreed otherwise. Representations must relate to one or more of the licensing objectives (namely crime and disorder, public nuisance, public safety, or protection of children from harm.) Individuals making a representation must live in the vicinity of the premise.

It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine of £5,000 is liable on summary conviction for the offence.

Dated this 21st day of April 2011.

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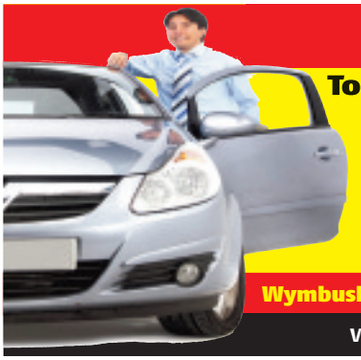

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FIXTURES 2010-11

DONS' SCORE FIRST

August

7	Walsall	A	2-1
10	Dag & Red H (Carling Cup)	H	2-1
21	Carlisle	A	1-4
24	Blackpool (Carling Cup)	H	4-3
28	Swindon	H	2-1

September

4	Hartlepool	H	1-0
11	Brighton	A	0-2
15	Southampton	H	2-0
18	Rochdale	H	1-1
21	Birmingham (Carling Cup)	A	1-3
25	Peterborough	A	1-2
28	Charlton	A	0-1

October

2	Colchester	H	1-1
5	Charlton (JPT)	H	1-2
9	Dag & Red	H	2-0
16	Bournemouth	A	2-3
23	Exeter	H	1-0
30	Tranmere	A	2-4

November

2	Yeovil	H	3-2
6	Stevenage (FAC)	A	0-0
13	Brentford	A	2-0
16	Stevenage (FAC) (Stevenage win 7-6 on penalties)	H	1-1
20	Sheff Wed	H	1-4
23	Huddersfield	A	1-4

December

11	Notts County	A	0-2
28	Bournemouth	H	2-0

January

1	Bristol Rovers	H	2-0
3	Yeovil	A	0-1
8	Exeter	A	1-1
15	Tranmere	H	2-0
18	Plymouth	H	1-3
22	Dag & Red	A	1-0
25	Leyton Orient	A	2-2

February

2	Bristol Rovers	A	2-1
5	Sheff Wed	A	2-2
12	Brentford	H	1-1
15	Leyton Orient	H	2-3
19	Hartlepool	A	1-0
22	Oldham	H	0-0
26	Brighton	H	1-0

March

5	Rochdale	A	4-1
8	Charlton	H	2-0
12	Colchester	A	3-1
21	Peterborough	H	1-0
25	Walsall	H	1-1

April

2	Southampton	A	2-3
9	Carlisle	H	3-2
16	Swindon	A	1-0
22	Huddersfield	H	1-3
25	Plymouth	A	0-1
30	Notts County	H	

May

7	Oldham	A	

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MK Dons assistant manager JOHN GORMAN writes exclusively for MK NEWS every week

WE WERE very unlucky at the weekend.

Monday against Plymouth was one of those games where we were the better side, and it's frustrating when you play well and don't get anything out of it at the end.

Even Peter Reid came out and said we were the better team and they were lucky, and I think with our domination in that game we deserved more than what we got.

And of course it was a hard trip to do after a tough, hot game on the Friday against Huddersfield, when I thought we were better in that game as well.

We missed a lot of chances and I felt we deserved at least a draw, but sometimes football goes that way and the keeper was fantastic.

We've had wins away from home this season, like at Swindon, where we've won by the odd goal and people just accept that.

Sometimes you play well and that's what happens, and now, even if on Saturday we win by not playing our best then that's fine, we just need the three points.

The weekend's results haven't affected confidence at all. If we had played poorly it would have, but we played well.

You won't win every game playing our style of football, and there will be times when the ball just doesn't go in.

We are taking heart from the weekend, as we created a lot of chances and nine out of ten times the goals should come.

We will continue to try to create chances, we should be in the play-offs and we deserve it.

For the final two games, I really want the fans to get behind us. The 2,500 fans that followed Huddersfield showed what an effect they can have on a team - Plymouth's fans were right behind them from the off too.

Fans can be so encouraging, so if they can get behind us as well that will be great for our chances.

LEAGUE ONE TABLE

			HOME					AWAY						
1	Brighton	44	17	4	1	52	19	11	6	5	30	17	46	94
2	Southampton	43	15	4	3	41	12	10	4	7	36	24	41	83
3	Huddersfield	44	12	7	3	34	17	12	4	6	36	25	28	83
4	Peterborough	44	14	5	3	64	40	8	4	10	35	33	26	75
5	MK Dons	44	13	5	4	33	22	8	3	11	30	36	5	71
6	Bournemouth	44	13	5	4	46	22	6	8	8	26	28	22	70
7	Leyton Orient	44	12	6	4	37	22	6	7	9	30	36	9	67
8	Rochdale	44	9	7	6	34	28	8	6	8	25	24	7	64
9	Exeter	44	11	5	6	39	31	7	5	10	24	41	-9	64
10	Brentford	44	9	5	8	24	25	8	4	10	27	30	-4	60
11	Carlisle	44	9	7	6	34	24	7	4	11	26	33	3	59
12	Colchester	44	11	7	4	36	29	4	7	11	17	29	-5	59
13	Charlton	44	10	5	7	29	29	5	8	9	33	35	-2	58
14	Sheff Wed	44	10	5	7	37	27	6	4	12	28	37	1	57
15	Hartlepool	44	9	5	8	30	30	6	5	11	15	33	-18	55
16	Oldham	44	7	9	6	28	29	5	8	9	22	29	-8	53
17	Tranmere	44	9	4	9	28	25	5	7	10	22	33	-8	53
18	Yeovil	44	7	6	9	23	28	7	5	10	27	36	-14	53
19	Notts County	44	9	2	11	23	24	5	5	12	21	33	-13	49
20	Walsall	44	8	3	11	31	36	3	9	10	22	36	-19	45
21	Dag & Red	44	7	6	9	25	27	4	5	13	24	38	-16	44
22	Bristol Rovers	44	6	6	10	23	34	5	5	12	23	45	-33	44
23	Plymouth	43	9	4	8	25	26	6	3	13	24	40	-17	42
24	Swindon	44	5	9	8	20	25	3	5	14	28	45	-22	38

Dons skipper Dean Lewington is a picture of concentration as he tussles with Argyle's Yannick Bolasie

Play-off pressure on after defeats

MK Dons 1
Huddersfield Town 3

MK DONS were given a clinical lesson in the difference between automatic promotion and a passage through the play-offs as Huddersfield Town crucified them on Good Friday for their wastefulness in front of goal.

Nevertheless, Dons played some fantastic football and were unfortunate to find themselves two goals down through a stunning strike from Scott Arfield and then left back Lee Peltier's controversial second goal of the season.

The Terriers were mere spectators in the opening ten minutes as the hosts exercised a period of keep ball, but Arfield stunned Dons fans and players with a 25-yard screamer in the 23rd minute that whizzed into the top corner past the desperate dive of the previously redundant Martin.

The lead should have lasted only a matter of minutes as Powell had his standing leg whipped away from him by Clarke and referee Roger East pointed to the spot. Leven stepped up and went for the corner, but the man between the sticks foiled his plan.

Dons continued to press but it was Huddersfield who scored again, this time in controversial circumstances.

Striker Benik Afobe had looked to have run the ball out for a Milton Keynes corner and initially linesman Mike Buonassi agreed, signalling so, before changing his mind and indicating in favour of the West Yorkshire side.

Former Liverpool trainee Peltier headed in from the set piece.

Martin kept his side in the contest by emulating his opposite number and saving from the spot just after the hour mark. There was no question MacKenzie had scythed down Afobe but the MK keeper guessed right to stop Arfield's rasping effort before Afobe blasted the rebound over.

However, the points were secured five minutes later when Cadamarteri glanced in Roberts' free kick.

Kouo-Doumbe then converted a corner from close range in the final minute.

MK Dons: Martin, Lewington, Kouo-Doumbe, MacKenzie, O'Hanlon (Clayton, 73), Gleeson, Baldock, Balanta (Ibhere, 69), Leven, Chadwick (Marsh-Brown, 63), Powell.
Unused Subs: Searle, Vine, Chicksen, Flanagan.
Attendance: 11,857.

COMING UP

Notts County
League One
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KO 3pm

THESE two teams come into this game with contrasting form and all to play for. Now under control of former Dons boss, Martin Allen, The Magpies' recent form, two wins and a draw, has moved them away from the danger zone but they are not yet mathematically safe. Top scorer Lee Hughes has been a thorn in the side of the Dons and he was on the score sheet last time the teams met in December.

With the the Dons still needing a win to guarantee a play off place they must put the last defeats behind them.

Plymouth Argyle 1
MK Dons 0

DONS conceded in the 21st minute after Sean O'Hanlon was adjudged to have slowed down Yannick Bolasie's run down the left channel.

Simon Walton teed up the ball 25 yards out and struck a sweet, curling shot that eluded the head of recalled Argyle target man Rory Fallon and nestled in the far side of the net.

It was enough to stir the Dons into counter action and they were unlucky not to level in the 27th minute following intense pressure.

Daniel Powell let fly with a thumping shot that on-loan Tottenham keeper David Button did well to keep out. The ball fell kindly to Angelo Balanta, whose follow-up strike seemed destined for the corner of the net only for Argyle right back Karl Duguid to clear off the line.

Again the ball fell to a Dons player but Peter Leven's first time rising drive flew over the bar from 20 yards.

Jabo Ibehre should have scored early in the second half following a superb, pacy cross to the near post from Dons skipper Dean Lewington, but his headed effort flew over.

Dons number one Martin made a brilliant 74th minute diving save to his left to palm away Arnason's goal-bound angled drive from the left.

Minutes later Martin denied Bolasie after the winger had been put in on goal following a one-two with Arnason.

MK Dons: Martin, Lewington, Doumbe, MacKenzie, O'Hanlon (Clayton, 79), Gleeson, Leven, Chadwick, Powell (Marsh-Brown, 69), Balanta (Baldock, 60), Ibehre.
Unused subs: Searle, Woodards, Chicksen, Guy.
Attendance: 8,553.

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Pitstops key to success claims Red Bull boss

OVERTAKING aids and pit stop strategy could be the key to success, according to Red Bull's Racing boss.

Speaking after Mark Webber's remarkable podium finish in the Chinese GP, from 18th on the grid, team principal Christian Horner said that a pole position is not as important.

Horner has praised Webber's superb performance and appreciated his pit stop strategy during his China race.

He also said that a pole position in the qualifying round will no longer be the key to winning at certain race circuits because they have difficult corners.

Horner said, "It makes you question the value of qualifying. Now the cars can overtake and with such a big difference between old and new tyres, we are going to have to reassess at each track how important it is to get to the front of the grid. Our strategists will look at how we should be structuring our race weekends".

In first three events of this season, the Australian, Malaysian and Chinese grand prixs, the degradation of this season's Pirelli tyres has been a big influence in the outcome.

With each driver having three sets of hard tyres and three sets of soft tyres for both the race and the qualifying round top runners used all three sets of soft tyres in their qualifying round and stopped once for a set of hard tyres in the latter stages of the race.

However Horner believes that drivers can improve by saving new sets of soft tyres for their races even though using hard tyres in qualifing compromises their grid positions.

Left: Red Bull Racing team principal Christian Horner at the Grand Prix in China. Right: Sebastian Vettel gets a tyre change

He said, "According to the characteristics of the track and the tyres at any given weekend, you might want to tilt the whole thing in favour of having fast, new tyres at key parts of the race, maybe at the expense of qualifying."

With all Formula 1 teams still busy getting to grips with the new tyre issues, Red Bull hopes to maintain their good early season form in the next GP at Istanbul Park in Turkey with an upgrade of its Kinetic Energy Recovery System (KERS), which, they hope, will prevent a repeat of the issues that have dogged the team in the early races of the campaign.

Both Sebastian Vettel and Webber have encountered problems with their KERS at every race held so far with the issues almost certainly playing a part in preventing Vettel extending his winning streak in China.

And although the team still has a number of issues to overcome before it can be confident it has got on top of the KERS problems, Horner says that he is optimistic about the work being done.

"We have got another upgrade of KERS coming for Turkey," he explained. "It is getting better and better as we get more understanding of the system and more mileage on it.

"So I am confident that the niggly issues that we have with it, we have fixes in the pipeline."

Webber said after the race in China that it was important the team got a grip on the KERS issues as soon as possible.

"It's a key component in Formula 1 these days, so it's completely obvious that we want to address it as soon as possible," he said.

"We have awesome guys on the case. As I say, with the limited experience we have, that's the way it is and we're still going okay in the Constructors' Championship."

Practice and qualifying for the Turkish GP starts on May 6 with the race on Sunday, May 8.

Whip ban request causes racing uproar

DIRECTORS at Towcester race course caused an uproar in the world of horse racing after unilaterally asking for a ban on the use of the whip last week.

Towcester's decision to ask for the ban on jockeys hitting their mounts with the whip appears unlikely to be ratified by the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) in the immediate future.

The venue wants all races to be run under the same regulations as those for the apprentice 'hands and heels' series at their jumps meetings from October 5. This means jockeys would be allowed to carry whips, but only use them in front of the saddle.

The BHA has already announced a review of the use of the whip following complaints after the Grand National, when winning rider Jason Maguire picked up a five-day ban for excessive use.

"We only received Towcester's request on Thursday afternoon. This is certainly not something that can happen without the permission and agreement of the BHA," said the authority's head of communications, Paul Struthers.

Towcester's request will be looked at as part of a wider review and the BHA has already had several discussions with the RSPCA about it and statistical analysis has been ongoing for some time.

"This will be a wide-ranging review of the issue, which will seek the views and input from various sectors within the industry. It will also take into account the views of those who watch and bet on racing as well as wider public perception, through polling and a survey," said Mr Struthers.

"We are not in a position to put a timescale on when we will reach our conclusions. How the whip is best regulated within racing for the good of the sport is a crucial issue for the sport to get to grips with, and it is vital we get it right."

Towcester general manager Kevin Ackerman told TV's At The Races: "The groundswell of public opinion seems to be reaching a crescendo – that the whip is cruel to horses. That seems to be the public's perception.

"The policy at Towcester is we advocate jockeys carrying the whip, but we don't advocate it being used behind the saddle in any stage of the race. We are viewing it as a case for the BHA to use us a pilot racecourse to test the water on this subject."

Towcester's initiative cannot be implemented without the approval of the BHA.

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Pitstops crucial says Red Bull Racing boss – page 63

Matthias Kouo-Doumbe nicks the ball from Yannick Bolasie against Plymouth Argyle on Monday

Dons one win away

BY ADAM GRINSELL
adam.grinsell@mk-news.co.uk

ONLY time will tell what significance the weekend's results will have on MK Dons' promotion push.

Everything seemed to be going Dons' way prior to Good Friday, with a great run of form which included a win against champions Brighton, a 4-1 drubbing of fellow play-off contenders Rochdale, a back-from-the-brink win against Carlisle and hard-fought victories against the likes of Hartlepool and Swindon.

But the tide seemed to turn in what was expected to be a tough game against the Terriers.

Dons were given a clinical lesson in the difference between automatic promotion and a passage through the play-offs as Huddersfield Town crucified them for their wastefulness in front of goal.

Despite a hatful of chances, the ball seemed destined not to end up in the net, and the same can be said of their tie at lowly Plymouth three days later.

Consistent pressure proved fruitless for Karl Robinson's side, who still sit in fifth place but now with only a four-point gap, and an inferior goal difference, over Leyton Orient after they beat Carlisle.

But boss Robinson said the play-off fight remains in their own hands, with three more points against strugglers Notts County needed to seal their top-six place on Saturday.

On the club's official website, he said: "Leyton Orient have got to win their two games and we need one win.

"I'm very positive we're in a very good position and we can look forward rather than backwards."

But this little blip in their form is ill timed, and history will remember those teams who won the play-offs after finishing in sixth place with a good run of wins coming into the end of the season, such as Blackpool and Derby County.

Despite this, Robinson is backing his players to come back from the weekend's disappointing results.

After the Plymouth game, he said: "I am lucky to have inherited a very strong group of players, so I am sure they will pull themselves together and they will push on from here.

"Defeat is part of the industry. It's part of what we do and all we have to do now is make sure we recover in the right way and move on from here."

New key to Lions' plans says boss

MK LIONS owner Vince Macaulay has announced that Mike New will stay on as head coach despite failing to make this seasons play-offs.

In the past Macaulay has been ruthless in 'letting go' every coach, including himself, who has missed out on a post-season slot.

Speaking on the MK Lions website Macaulay said: "Mike will be back. No question. He's a key individual in our organisation. He's on a learning curve and I'm putting things around to help him."

Keeping the faith will be a relief to New, who called time on his long BBL career last summer to make the move onto the bench.

A big plus for him this season was the signing of Demarius Bolds who picked up Player of the Year at the Awards Night earlier this month.

The 6ft 3ins American frontman has been a firm favourite of supporters since joining the club.

The Lions finished the season third from bottom of the table but lost many games by the odd point.

However, the coach, now looking ahead to his second year at the helm, sees little need for deliberate tinkering.

"After the season we've had, I'd like to keep the nucleus together," said New. "There are a few obvious improvements we need to make but not very many. I like the team we have."

Off court, stability is also the byword as the club continue developing their Winterhill venue – for the first time in five years the Lions will know where they will be based come September.

"We can now start selling season tickets," said Macaulay, "we haven't done that in years."

"We can tell sponsors what we can offer and TV works well here. We can get back to focusing on what we do best which is basketball," he added.